

Introduction

There is a Jewish saying, "Remembrance brings action in its train" (Talmud Menahot 13). It means that remembering instruction associated with God's Word produces godly thought and behavior. Knowing and studying God's Word is essential for spiritual growth! And prayer plays a vital part in our walk with God.

In one sense, "Prayer is as simple as a child making known its wants to its parents." Biblical prayer does have order, structure and guidelines to follow in order to be effective in your Christian way of life. Yet, we are to be ourselves with God when we pray. We are to be natural before God. He can tell if we are not acting like ourselves and pretending to be somebody that we are not. Tell the Father whatever is on your heart and mind with whatever words are most natural to you.

Why? Many believers try and use prayer to get their own way, not God's way. Prayer must be compatible with God's will and God's way. Sometimes it may be our will and our way, but other times it may not.

Prayer should be as instinctive as breathing. God made man and woman in his image, therefore we must communicate with Him. While prayer is instinctive, the ability to effectively pray is not automatic.

None of us know how to pray as we ought, so God has given His Holy Spirit to help us.

Quick Introductory Notes on Prayer

1. Prayer is simply conversation (expressing your thoughts and concerns) with God the Father, with your own understanding of the Word of God (what you have already learned), in your own KNOWN language. The Bible is God's thoughts to mankind (not in an audible voice but through His Word). Therefore, believers can have two-way communication with God.
2. Why Pray? You are commanded (an imperative). **Matthew 26:36-41** Pray alters me; prayer alters others; prayer alters circumstances through me. We pray:
 - A. To express praise to God
 - B. To acknowledge our sin (1 John 1:9)
 - C. To give thanks
 - D. To intercede for others

- E. To convey our personal needs
- F. To have an intimate conversation with God

3. The Principles of Prayer

- A. Prayer is for Christian believers only. One can address God as Father only as a member of the family of God. *John 1:12; Galatians 3:26*
- B. Prayer should be directed to God the Father. *Ephesians 5:20; Matthew 6:9; 1 Peter 1:17*
- C. Prayer should be made in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. *John 14:13, 15:16*
- D. The power for prayer is through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Prayer is never made to the Holy Spirit. *Ephesians 6:18*

4. There are 3 categories of prayer:

- A. **Access Prayer**: This is the provision of ACCESS to fellowship with God through a salvation relationship with Him (*Acts 16:31*). The experience of access to God through prayer is based on fellowship with Him. *John 15:7*
- B. **Praise Prayer**: This is communion with God based on understanding His person and work which falls into two categories:
 - i. Exaltation: *Hebrews 13:15*
 - ii. Thanksgiving: *Ephesians 5:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:18*
- C. **Petition**: This is asking for things from God
 - i. Prayer for self
 - ii. Prayer for others
 - iii. Prayer for those unable to pray for themselves (unbelievers or believers)

5. Four Parts to Private Prayer

- A. The first part of private prayer is the confession of personal sins. This makes it possible for the Lord to respond to the other parts of the prayer because the believer is in fellowship when he prays. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." *Psalms 66:18*
See also 1 John 1:6-10; 1 John 1:9

- B. Next, thanksgiving should be made to express appreciation to God the Father for His blessing and provision. ***Ephesians 5:20***
 - C. Then, prayer should be made for others (intercession).
 - D. Finally, it is in order to pray for one's own needs. ***Hebrews 4:16***
6. **The Time of Prayer:** Anytime you want. No specific time is better than others. All times are represented in Scripture.
 7. **The frequency of Prayer:** *1 Thessalonians 5:17 teaches that prayer should be a constant attitude, "pray continuously."* ***Luke 18:1***, "that at all times they ought to pray and not lose heart."
 8. Four Steps that Can Help Believers Stay in Fellowship:
 - A. **Confess It:** This means to name it to God (***1 John 1:9***). This is total dependence on God.
 - B. **Forget It:** This means that each time the situation comes up, replace it with something you know about God. ***Philippians 3:13***
 - C. **Isolate It:** This means that we are to remember there are certain things we cannot deal with. ***Hebrews 12:15***
 - D. **Forgive As Christ Forgives You:** This means be willing to restore any broken fellowship you may have with someone. ***Colossians 3:13***

Let's Begin This Study of Prayer with Some Introductory Principles

- A. Prayer is not designed to manipulate God, but to perform and conform to His will. Remember, He knows all of your thoughts and nothing is hidden from Him. As ***Hebrews 4:13*** says, *And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things lie open and exposed before the eyes of Him with whom we have to answer.*
- B. We do not use prayer to hire God to do what we want done. Too many believers try to use prayer to get their own way, not God's way. ***1 John 5:14-15*** - *"and this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him."*

Notice that knowledge of God and confidence in Him are both very important in prayer. People lack knowledge because of ignorance of Bible doctrine, and they lack confidence because of not understanding grace.

- C. Prayer must be compatible with God's will and God's way, not our will or our way. **James 4:2-3** *"You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. And you are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures."* Prayer is not what we want but what God wants for us.
- D. Prayer must recognize who and what God is, not who and what we are.
- We are to draw near to God with adoration and thanksgiving because of Who and What He is. The Apostle Paul learned this in **2 Corinthians 12:8-9**, when he prayed three times that the Lord would remove one of Satan's angels from troubling him, and the Lord would not answer the his situation. The answer is found in **2 Corinthians 12:9** - *And he had said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you."*
- E. Prayer is also a part of Christian service, and as such, effective prayer is a result of spiritual growth, and **must comply with other doctrinal principles of Christian service.**
- F. Prayer is not designed to get us out of trouble, but rather it is to express our helplessness, our humility, our total dependence on God. Prayer is our recognition and orientation to His grace and mercy toward us.

Scriptures on Prayer

Romans 8:26 (NASB)

²⁶*In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;*

You must know what God says in His Word about prayer if you want to use it properly and receive maximum benefits from it.

Jesus said, John 15:7 (NASB)

⁷*If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*

We pray, or should, because we are commanded to pray. Prayer is not optional but a mandate as part of our priesthood. The question should not be, "if I pray" but rather, "how should I pray, correctly?"

1 John 5:14-15 *"And this is the ¹confidence which we have before Him, that, ²if ³we ask anything ⁴according to His will, ⁵He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him."*

1. **“confidence”**- God expects us to have confidence in Him, His Word, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. He expects us to have confidence in testing, adversity, pressure, and troubles. He expects us to come confidently to Him for help when we need it. Therefore, God has given us total and immediate access to Him in prayer.
2. **“if”** - it may or may not be true
3. **“we ask anything”**- Some believers pray to God about everything and others do not. Some believers do not know how to ask but ask incorrectly anyway. Some believers know exactly how to ask but fail to ask. Only believers who know how to ask correctly according to His will, and do so with confidence, receives that for which he asks.
4. **“according to His will”**- following all the protocols of prayer (knowing and understanding what He wants) God has only one way of doing a thing – the right way!
5. **“He hears us”**- This does not mean that God just hears and does nothing. It means that God hears and acts upon the request.

1 John 5:15 (NASB)

¹⁵ And ¹*if* we ²*know* that He hears us ³*in whatever* ⁴*we ask*, ⁵*we know* that ⁶*we have the requests* which ⁷*we have asked from Him*.

1. **“if”**- it may or may not be true – if this does not take place then this will not happen. It is not whether or not God hears us, but whether or not we ask.
2. **“know”** - knowing God hears us is contingent upon us having studied His Word, committed it to memory and using it as needed. When we apply what we know, it produces confidence knowing that we are asking according to His will.
3. **“in whatever”** - this indicates that all kinds of categories of request are included here. We may pray for our nation, elected officials, our family, friends, our church, etc.
4. **“we ask”** - to pray with confidence according to the will of God
5. **“we know”** - because of what we know based on God’s Word.

A. For a believer to serve God well, he must know God whom he endeavors to serve.

- B. To know God, a believer must make himself available to sound teaching of the Word of God.
- C. For one to make himself available to the teaching of the Word of God, he must have his priorities straight. Bible doctrine must be on the top of his scale of preference.
- D. For the believer to make Bible doctrine his first priority in life, he must be willing to make a lot of sacrifices. He must be willing to avoid distractions at all cost.

When these four points (A-D) are in order, knowledge about God, serving and glorifying Him becomes a reality in the believer's life, then you will spend time in prayer with God.

- 6. ***“we have the requests”*** – the result of our confidence in him knowing that God withholds no good thing from us.
- 7. ***“we have asked from Him”***- the mature believer wants what God wants, therefore, he asks that God’s will be done. The immature believer wants what he wants and he wants it now.

Psalm 40:11 (NASB)

¹¹ You, O LORD, will not withhold Your compassion from me; Your lovingkindness and Your truth will continually preserve me.

Steps of Success or Failure

1. Attitude

Which approach to life will you take?

- A. Self-centered (arrogance)
- B. Christ-centered (humility)

2. Priorities

What's important to you becomes your priority!!

- A. Value system based on eternal (based on the Word of God)
- B. Value system based on temporal things (the cosmic system or the Olson nature)

things

3. **Decisions**

- A. Spiritual and sacrificial
- B. Carnal and selfish

Who do you want guiding your life?

4. **Actions** (application)

- A. Right actions
- B. Wrong actions

**A right thing done in a wrong way is wrong.
A right thing done in a right way is right.**

5. **Results** (of my action)

- A. Blessing (success)
- B. Discipline (failure)

**Winner or Loser believer!!
(Your choice)**



God's Provision of Prayer

God provided prayer so that believers can combat the sin nature (**Romans 5:12-19**, 7), resist the devil, and exist in a world controlled and dominated by the kingdom of darkness. Prayer is needed to prepare and protect us for battles with the cosmic system (anti-god thinking). **Ephesians 6:10-19**

Prayer along with spiritual armor helps us stand firm against all attacks. **Daniel 10:1; Ephesians 6:10-18**

Prayer allows us to approach the Father and totally depend on His sufficiency to meet our every need.

When the believer offers up praise, thanksgiving, petitions, and intercessions to the Father, he is demonstrating an absolute dependence upon Him whether spiritual, material or physical, thus worshipping Him.

Prayer glorifies God because it demonstrates the believer's total dependency upon God. It demonstrates the believer's humility before God. We, by praying, acknowledge our insufficiency and reaffirm His all-sufficiency, fatherly care, and gracious provision.

Prayer is needed to compensate for the great gap between our inadequacy and God's sufficiency. His sufficiency makes all things possible. With man, many things are impossible but with God, nothing is impossible. **Luke 1:37, 18:27, 19:26; Mark 9:23, 10:27, 14:36**

God provides the believer prayer in order that he might execute His will, which is twofold, to glorify and to grow.

God wants us to grow to spiritual maturity and become like His Son, Jesus Christ, all the while glorifying Him in our spiritual walk.

It is impossible to execute the Father's will without the provision of prayer. Thus, a productive prayer life is necessary to execute the will of God.

1 John 5:14-15 (NASB) ¹⁴ *This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.* ¹⁵ *And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.*

Facts about Prayer

1. Prayer is that grace provision of the Royal Priesthood whereby the Church Age believer has the privilege of communicating directly with God.

2. You do not pray to become spiritual; you pray because you are spiritual. Spirituality is the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Prayer is the result of spiritual growth; it is not the cause of your spiritual growth. You are either filled with the Holy Spirit or you are not.

YOUR PRAYER LIFE IS NO STRONGER THAN YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE.

3. Prayer demands concentration and thought; it is not a mindless activity. Focus on doctrine and facts, not emotions and subjectivity. One of the greatest problems in prayer is **concentration**. All forms of worship are a concentration test. This test can be divided into three categories:
 - A. **Concentration on the teaching of doctrine.** This reflects your values, motivation, spiritual condition and your spiritual status quo. Bible Doctrine should have number one priority.
 - B. **Concentration in the communion service.** This is a reflection of the person and work of Christ.
 - C. **Concentration in your personal prayers, during public prayers (when others are praying) and in your petitions and intercessions.** Prayer is a challenge to concentration.

The pattern of concentration in all forms of worship is established in the function of your perception, metabolization (make use of) and application of Bible Doctrine in your life. If you can concentrate on Bible Doctrine in times of stress, adversity, or even in times of prosperity, then you can concentrate in prayer.

There is a direct relationship between concentration in Bible study and prayer under the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

4. Prayer should be the highest priority in your life after learning doctrine. It is to be habitual; setting aside times to pray throughout the day.
5. As believers, our prayers fail because we fail in our spiritual life; we do not understand the plan, purpose of will of God.
6. We pray (or should) because we are commanded to pray.
7. A right thing done in a wrong way is wrong. A wrong thing done in a right way is wrong. Only a right thing done in a right way is right. The believer should pursue his prayer life with an intensity that overcomes all obstacles.

8. Principles of Prayer:

- A. Effectiveness depends on consistent intake of the Word of God. ***John 15:7***
- B. Part of God's will for believers. ***Jeremiah 33:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18***
- C. All prayer was taken into account by God in the divine decrees. ***Isaiah 65:24***
- D. Demands understanding of and orientation to the will of God. ***1 John 5:14***
- E. Must be offered in the filling of the Holy Spirit. ***Ephesians 6:18***
- F. Must be offered in accordance with the principle of grace, the plan of God.
Hebrews 4:16
- G. It is an extension of faith toward God. Believers are to pray in faith, believing, without any doubting. ***Matthew 21:21-22; Mark 11:24; James 1:5-7***
- H. Is ineffective when the believer is carnal. ***Psalms 66:18; Proverbs 1:28*** There are some things we are not to pray for (***1 John 5:15***) such as praying against the known will of God. ***Exodus 32:32-34***
- I. Believers are to pray about everything. ***Philippians 4:6***
- J. Believers are to pray for wisdom. ***James 1:5***
- K. Believers are commanded to pray without ceasing, continually and fervently. ***Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 3:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17***
- L. Believers are always to include thanksgiving in their prayers. ***1 Thessalonians 5:17-18; Ephesians 5:20; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 3:15-17, 4:2***
- M. Believers often do not have because they do not ask. ***James 4:2***
- N. Is always a recognition of the source of our logistical grace. ***2 Corinthians 9:8 with Matthew 6:25-34; Ephesians 3:20; Philippians 4:19***
- O. Believers who are obedient to God's commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight receive whatever they ask in prayer. ***John 15:7; 1 John 3:33***
- P. The believer who has demonstrated God's righteousness has great effectiveness in prayer. ***James 5:16b; Proverbs 15:8, 29***
- Q. Prayer is related to the believer's love for God. ***Psalms 116:1-2; Mark 11:25; James 4:3***

9. Intercessory Prayer:

- A. Elijah provides an example of the **power of intercessory prayer**. *1 Kings 18:32-45; James 5:16-18*
- B. **Prevailing prayer** is a system under which an impending crisis is prayed for continually. *Acts 12:5, 12; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17*
- C. Prayer should be offered **for the unbelievers** to understand the issue of the gospel clearly so that they might believe and be saved. *Romans 10:1-4*
- D. Prayer should be offered **for unknown believers**. *Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 1:3-11*
- E. Prayer should be offered **for known believers**. *Ephesians 6:19; Colossians 4:3*
- F. A **pattern of personal prayer** is found in the “Apostles Prayer”. *Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4* sometimes called “The Lord’s Prayer”.
- G. The great **intercessory prayer** of the Lord Jesus Christ. *John 17:1-26*

10. Principles of Grace in Prayer:

- A. Prayer is a privilege of the Royal Family and an extension of the grace function; hence, it is impossible to approach God in prayer on the basis of human merit.
- B. The believer priest approaches God in prayer on the basis of our high priest, Jesus Christ, and His merit only. *Titus 3:5; Hebrews 4:14-16, 8:1-3, 9:12,15*
- C. Prayers must be offered in humility. When praying, God does not show favoritism. No one has an advantage over another person. *2 Chronicles 7:14; Acts 10:34 cf. Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:24*
- D. God hears our prayers because we are believers in Jesus Christ, we believe and apply His Word and we have the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit. *John 9:31, 14:12-17; 1 John 5:14-15*
- E. God hears and answers prayers on the basis of who and what Christ is and whether or not we are in Christ and in fellowship.

11. Reasons Why Prayer is Not Answered: (As believers we fail in our spiritual life; we do not understand the plan, purpose or will of God.)

- A. Carnality: the status of a believer who sins and losses the filling of the Holy Spirit, also called “Grieving the Holy Spirit”. Carnality produces sins from the area of weakness in our old sin nature. These sins were borne at the Cross!) *1 Corinthians 3:1, 3; Ephesians 5:18, 6:18, 4:30; John 9:31; 1 John 1:8, 10*

- B. Arrogant Pride: the first mental attitude sin which results in self-righteousness and no answer from God. *Job 35:12, 13*
- C. Any mental attitude sin or other personal sin which produces carnality will render any prayer, other than a prayer of confession, useless. *Psalms 66:18*
- D. Any prayer not asked in faith without doubting will result in no answer from God. *James 1:6-8*
- E. Lack of compassion, a sin of omission, neutralizes prayer. *Proverbs 21:13; James 4:17 cf. Jonah*
- F. Failure to forgive others neutralizes prayer. *Matthew 6:14-15; Mark 11:25*
- G. Malfunction in marriage hinders prayer. *1 Peter 3:7*
- H. Quenching the Holy Spirit. Producing human good from the area of strength in the old sin nature. (Rejected and condemned at the Cross!) *1 Thessalonians 5:19*

The Approach to God

All prayer is an expression of thought, therefore, the mentality (what we have learned) of the soul

And human volition (our will and how we decide to use what we have learned.) are both involved.

Prayer is motivated by the Word of God in the soul and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer in fellowship (sin confessed).

Approach to God in Prayer:

1. The *address of prayer* is to the **Father** (*Matthew 6:6, 9; Luke 11:2; Ephesians 3:14; Ephesians 5:20; 1 Peter 1:17*)
2. The *channel of the approach* and the authority for prayer is *in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*. *John 14:13, 14, 16:23, 24*
3. The *transmission of the approach* is through the *power of the Holy Spirit*. *Ephesians 6:18; Romans 8:26-27*

The Agenda for Prayer:

1. Confession: It is to acknowledge our sin. *1 John 1:9; 1 Corinthians 11:31; Psalm 32:5, 51:2-4*

2. Thanksgiving: Praise and Adoration. To acknowledge everything comes from God. *Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 3:16-17, 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Psalm 107:1, 136:1-3, 26, 138:1-2*
3. Intercession: To intercede (to pray) for others. *Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 4:3*
4. Petition: Supplication; to convey our personal needs. *Philippians 4:6; Hebrews 4:16; Psalm 5:2*
5. To have an intimate conversation with God.

Does God Answer Prayer? Yes!

1. Beyond Our Expectations - *Jeremiah 33:3 (NASB)*

³ *Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.* The problem, we often limit ourselves when it comes to prayer, because we do not pray and expect God to answer.

2. Sometimes After Delay - *Luke 18:7 (NASB)*

⁷ *now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?* The concept here is about having patients. God's timing may be different than ours.

3. Sometimes Differently from Our Desire - *2 Corinthians 12:8-9 (NASB)*

⁸ *Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me.*

⁹ *And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.* Sometimes when God answers our prayer it is not exactly what we expected. We don't always know what is best.

4. Sometimes Immediately (yes) - *Isaiah 65:24 (NASB)*

²⁴ *"It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.* Don't be shocked when God answers your prayer!

5. Our Prayer Is Not Answered if We Ask Amiss (no) - *James 4:3 (NASB)*

³ *You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.* Be careful of having the wrong motive!

Four Ways Prayers Are Answered

Many times we pray for things because we think that what we ask for will bring happiness to ourselves or to someone else. The petition may be for some specific detail of life such good health, money or success in some enterprise. But the desire is for something less tangible, perhaps, like prosperity or happiness. Often the Lord will answer prayer by granting the unstated inner desire without granting the petition directly. Sometime we get everything we ask for, sometimes nothing. Here are the four methods which God uses to answer prayer.

1. Petition Granted Desire Not Granted

Psalm 106:15 (NASB) So He gave them their request, But sent a wasting disease among them.

In *Numbers 11* is the story of the Israelites wanting meat to eat. Their petition for meat was granted; but their desire for a pleasant experience was not answered.

In *1 Samuel 8*, the children of Israel asked for a king. They did not want to continue under God's personal rule. Their petition to have a king was granted. Their desire to be like other nations and to have peace was not granted. Instead, they had strife and civil war as long as Saul was their king.

2. Petition Not Granted Desire Granted

In *Genesis 17:18*, Abraham asks that Ishmael might be his established heir. His petition was denied; but his desire for a son and heir was later granted in the birth of Isaac.

In *Genesis 18*, Abraham prays for God to spare Sodom and Gomorrah. His request was denied; but his desire that Lot and his family be safe was granted.

See also *2 Corinthians 12:7-8*

3. Petition Granted Desire Granted

In *1 Kings 18*, Elijah prayed that God would destroy the altar on which offering had been made to Baal. His desire was that God would be glorified. His petition and desire were granted.

Samson asked God to strengthen him so that he could have vengeance on his Philistine enemies. Both petition and desire were granted. But God had already decided to judge the Philistines.

One of the thieves on the Cross petitioned Christ, “Remember me...” His desire was for salvation. Both his petition and his desire were granted.

4. Petition and Desire Denied

God sometimes does not grant either the petition or the desire. *John 16:23-24*

Conclusion

The Lord uses a variety of means to bring about those things we desire for ourselves and for others. However, His responses take into account His knowing all there is to know about every situation and what is best for everyone concerned. God does not wait to come up with a solution to our problems! He already has a solution! His answers are sometimes obvious, but at other times they are quite subtle. When the believer is aware of the various ways God answers prayer, he is better able to recognize the answers to prayer.

As an example, we might pray that a person be healed from some illness, not knowing why God has allowed that illness to occur in the first place. But our desire is that the sick person be happy, be prosperous, and be free of discomfort and pain. The person may remain ill, in spite of our prayers; yet God might make the Word of God more available to that person; and in his sick condition, the person may have more time to think on spiritual things. This could result in a great improvement in the growth of spiritual fruit in his life along with inner peace and prosperity. Therefore, one might see his desires realized while the actual prayer request seems to be unanswered.

Five Kinds of Prayer - 1 Samuel 12:23

²³ *"Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that **I should sin against the LORD** by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way.*

1. Personal Prayer

Mark 11:24 (NASB)

²⁴ *"Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you.*

2. United Prayer (coming together to pray as a church body)

A. *Acts 1:14 - "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication.*

B. *Acts 12:12 - "Where many were gathered together praying."*

C. *1 Thessalonians 1:2 - "Making mention of you in our prayers."*

3. Believing Prayer

A. *James 1:6-11 - Ask in faith, nothing wavering."*

B. *Mark 11:24 - "When ye pray, believe that ye shall receive."*

4. Mutual Prayer (Intercession - praying for a request by coming together with other Christians or from different geographical locations)

A. *Acts 8:24 - "Pray ye to the Lord for me."*

B. *2 Thessalonians 3:1- "Pray for us."*

5. Continual Prayer

A. *1 Thessalonians 5:17- "Pray without ceasing."*

B. *Romans 12:12 - "Continuing constant in prayer."*

God made man and woman in His image, therefore, we must communicate with Him. Prayer should be as instinctive as breathing. While prayer is instinctive, the ability to effectively pray is not automatic. None of us knows how to pray as we ought, so God has given His Holy Spirit to help us.

**Effective Faith Turns Personal Faith into Public Ministry!
Who we should be, but who are we?**

1. Every believer in Jesus Christ is an Ambassador of the Lord - our responsibility to the world! We are a representative of God. Our responsibility to the world and to unbelievers.
(*2 Corinthians 5:14-21*)
2. Every believer is a Believer Priest of God – Priesthood: it is our Relationship with God! We pray to God the Father and represent others and ourselves. (*1 Peter 2:5-9*)
3. Every believer is a minister to other believers - our Service to individuals and the world.
Praying for other believers is an important role of every believer. (*1 Corinthians 12:4-11*)
4. Every believer has the responsibility to witness to the unbeliever. (*Matthew 28:19-20; Acts*)
5. We all have a teaching ministry to others by our words and deeds - the functions of ambassador, Believer Priest, ministering to others, and witnessing. It is our responsibility to teach others and pass on God's Word. (*Hebrews 5:11-14; 1 Thessalonians 1:3-10; 1 Peter 3:1*)

Paul sees this as a mission of obligation, opportunity and honor.

Romans 1:14-17 (NASB)

¹⁴ *I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.*

¹⁵ *So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.* ¹⁶ *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.* ¹⁷ *For in it the righteousness of*

God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

Preliminary Considerations as a Believer Priest

Prayer, as with all issues of Bible doctrine, must be taught from the mandates of Scripture to the Royal Family of God to be properly understood.

Matthew 6:5-13 (NASB)

⁵ *"When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. ⁶ "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. ⁷ "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸ "So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. ⁹ "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ 'Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]*

If you are going to learn how to pray Biblically, you must go to the Bible and understand how God wants you to communicate with Him.

Luke 11:1 (NASB)

¹ *It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples."*

Like most doctrines in Scripture, the concept of legitimate prayer has suffered due to misconceptions and religious distortions.

Illustration: God, I have to go on a business trip to South Carolina. I'm leaving later than I should have and I will be traveling 95 S. I will have to break the speed limit to make up for leaving later than I should have. God, I am praying that you will help me not get a speeding ticket and I will arrive on time.

Romans 13:1–7 says we are to abide by the laws that have been written. The speed limit is 70 mph, to be obedient to God and the law of the land I must not break the speed limit. But I made it on time, because I broke the speed limit and was driving faster than I should have. Did God answer my prayer, because I did not get called by a police officer? No! Prayer is not designed to manipulate God and get what you want at any cost.

1. Prayer is not some kind of “blank check” which the believer fills in and God honors upon demand.
2. Prayer is not a system by which we seek to persuade God to acclimate to our thinking or try to force Him to do something we desire.
3. Prayer does not enable us to coerce God into doing something He does not want to do.
 - A. We cannot honestly pray for something that would violate God’s Essence or something that is against doctrinal principles!
 - B. We cannot legitimately ask Him to make an “exception” in our case.
 - C. If the answer to a prayer request is obviously “no”, we should not rationalize.
 - D. We should not misapply (God’s Word) and then ask God for deliverance from discipline.

Romans 8:26 (NASB)

²⁶ *In the same way the ¹Spirit ²also helps ³our weakness; ⁴for we do not know ⁵how to pray as we should, ⁶but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groaning’s too deep for words;*

1. **“Spirit”** - the Holy Spirit.
2. **“also helps”** - He will assist - it means to support or aid someone who is in a helpless and hopeless situation.
3. **“our weakness”** - things we cannot change ourselves; things that are bothering us, things that concerned us.
4. **“for we do not know”** - facing an issue or problem that we cannot control or fix to make it right. A situation that we cannot change that is beyond our ability.

It is easy to let our emotions get involved in a problem to the point that we quit thinking, start worrying and do not allow God to take care of it. It is definitely not the best thing for us to do when we try to fix a problem that is beyond our control.

Romans 8:26 (NASB77)

5. **“how to pray as we should”** - we do the best we can but only God can work things together. **Romans 8:28.**

6. ***“but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words”*** - you pray for something but it is not the best thing for you or for someone else. After your prayer, the Holy Spirit comes along and says Father – I’m inside this person – I know what he needs now – Father listen to my prayer! In addition to our prayers and the Holy Spirit, Jesus also prays for us.

Hebrews 7:25 (NASB)

²⁵ Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Jesus looks down and finds one of His children in trouble. He turns to the Father and says we have to rush down there to help him make it through the hardship he is going through at this moment.

Understanding the Proper Protocol for Prayer

You must know what God says in His Word about prayer if you want to use prayer properly and receive maximum benefits from it.

John 15:7 (NASB) Jesus Said-

⁷ “¹If you ²abide in Me, and ³My words abide in you, ask ⁴whatever you wish, ⁵and it will be done for you.

1. ***“If”*** - third class condition in Greek – meaning maybe you will or maybe you will not.
2. ***“abide”*** - being filled with the Holy Spirit; staying in fellowship; controlled by the Holy Spirit of God.
3. ***“My Words abide in you”*** - if you abide in me I will abide in you.
4. ***“whatever you wish”*** - you are benefited by learning and applying the Word of God and staying in fellowship.
5. ***“and it will be done for you”*** - from the prayer, you are benefited and the reality of the prayer is answered. If you are in fellowship, have learned what the Bible says, have applied His Word to the situation according to His will, you can be assured your prayer will be answered.

The first followers of Jesus understood this. They came to Him and asked, "Lord, teach us to pray." (***Luke 11:1***) In response He gave what many call "The Lord's Prayer."

What Prayer Can Do!

1. Prayer strengthens the soul.

Prayer is not designed to get us out of trouble, but rather to express our helplessness, our humility, our total dependence on God, and our recognition of His grace and His mercy toward us. Prayer is not what we want for ourselves, but what God wants for us.

Psalm 138:1-3 (NASB)

¹ I will give You thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to You before the gods. ² I will bow down toward Your holy temple And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name. ³ On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul.

Psalm 138:1-3 (NASB)

¹ I will give You thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to You before the gods. ² I will bow down toward Your holy temple And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name. ³ On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul.

Ephesians 3:20 (NASB)

²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

2. Prayer can be a source of stability and preservation when our life seems to be falling apart.

Psalm 121:1-4 (NASB)

¹ I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where shall my help come? ² My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth. ³ He will not allow your foot to

slip; He who keeps you will not slumber. ⁴ Behold, He who keeps Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep.

3. Prayer can impart peace.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NASB)

⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

What Prayer Will Not Do!

1. Prayer alone will not save the lost.

The apostles did not simply have regular meetings in which they prayed for others salvation, they shared God's Word about Christ – His work on the cross.

2. Prayer will not relieve us of our responsibility Biblically.

Some seem to think that instead of doing what God has commanded, they can simply pray. Prayer is not a substitute for what the Bible says we should do.

3. Prayer will not impart faith.

A. For salvation: when the jailer asked how to be saved, he was told to believe!

B. After salvation - the Word of God has to be taught so one can develop faith.

Romans 10:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

4. Prayer will not keep the Christian from trials.

Difficulties serve as a source of growth.

James 1:2-4 (NASB)

² Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

5. God has promised a way to escape!

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NASB)

¹³ No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

6. Prayer will not reveal the will of the Lord.

We find the will of God in His Word and then we pray.

7. Prayer will not sanctify your life!

Holiness of life is required but it does not result directly from prayer alone, conformity to the Word of God sanctifies. **John 17:17 (NASB)** ¹⁷ *"Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth."*

But, It Is True: We fail in prayer because we fail to understand and utilize the Word of God correctly.

That is why it says in **James 4:3 (NASB)** *You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

Isaiah 65:24 (NASB) *It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.* God hears the prayer twice: in eternity past and at the time of the prayer.

False Expectations about Prayer and What to Expect

The Lord promises that He will hear our prayers [**Romans 8:26-28**]. When these things are misunderstood, people become disillusioned and disappointed.

In pointing out these three false expectations, I am not going to undermine a proper faith in the power of prayer. I do truly believe, and the Bible clearly teaches, that prayer makes an enormous difference to our lives. We have to understand, however, the nature of this difference.

1. The First False Expectation

"Things will work out just as I plan or wish."

God never promised that he would answer all our worldly desires. Paul's plans and wishes were not always realized [**Romans 1:13, 1 Thessalonians 2:18**].

We must never assume that our plans will succeed [**James 4:13-15**].

Failures, frustration, disappointments are all part of life. God may not over-rule them but he ensures that nevertheless all things work together for our eternal good [**Romans 8:28**].

2. The Second False Expectation

"God will remove trouble and suffering from my life."

If that is what **Romans 8:28** means, then what does **Romans 8:25** mean?

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

God doesn't promise to remove tribulation from us. However, God promises that no adversity can separate us from Him, sometimes God uses our troubles "*for our profit*" in that we are strengthened by discipline [**Hebrews 12:5-11**].

Some quote **Isaiah 53:4** saying that Christ died for our sufferings and sicknesses. However, Matthew tells us that this prophecy was fulfilled by Jesus's ministry of healing, not by His death on the cross [**Matthew 8:14-17**]. It was "*for our iniquities*" [not our sicknesses and sufferings] that Jesus was crucified [**Isaiah 53:5**]. God does not remove Paul's "thorn in the flesh" [**2 Corinthians 12:7-10**]. God did not remove Timothy's "*frequent infirmities*" [**1 Timothy 5:23**]. Why not, if Christ died for them?

3. The Third False Expectation

"God will prove He is with me by providing me with signs"

It is unwise to interpret events in our lives as evidence of favor or disfavor from God toward us. How wrong such an interpretation turned out to be! [**John 9:1-3**]

There are some who have turned aside from the promises. Instead of promise, they want proof. Not satisfied to know that God is answering their prayers. They have to have signs, hour by hour, day by day, to sustain their faith. This can lead to manufacturing events in our lives so that we have little miracles to live by. But they are not really miracles or signs, just delusions and inventions of our own making. Such faith is built on a false foundation.

4. The True Expectation

"I will walk by faith and not by sight"

We "*walk by faith and not by sight*" which means that we believe the providence and promise of God without Him having to pepper our lives with proofs. Our right standing with God can be ascertained from His revealed Word, not by personal experiences which we attribute to God approving or disapproving of us [**2 Corinthians 5:7**]. We can suffer troubles without doubting our relationship with God.

Our main expectation is that God will bring us on our journey through this world to welcome us into our eternal home.

As we pray, it demonstrates our dependence upon God and is a major part of our lives.

Ephesians 6:18-19; Colossians 4:2-3; 1 Thessalonians 5:17]

The persons involved in prayer are:

1. The believer, who prays [**1 Thessalonians 5:17**]

2. The Father to Whom prayer is addressed [*Ephesians 3:14*]
3. Jesus Christ in Whose name the believer prays [*John 16:23-27*]
4. The Holy Spirit Who controls and enables the believer [*Ephesians 6:8*]

Every believer should establish priorities in their Christian Way of Life. It will involve making some sacrifices. If you are going to accomplish the most important things, you must motivate yourself. You cannot depend on someone else.

If you depend on someone else, you are borrowing their inspiration. That will never work because it results in stifling your own motivations so that when you are under adversity, you have no motivation to keep driving on.

Psalm 138:1-2 (NASB) ¹*I will give You thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to You before the gods.* ²*I will bow down toward Your holy temple And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name.*

1. Why does he give thanks? Based on what he knows about God as taught in the Bible.
2. You are the true (only God) there is none like You.
3. You are the only One that deserves our worship. You deserve our worship based on Who You are and what You have done and are what You are going to do.
4. I will give thanks for Who You are. What You have said is true. You have proven Yourself, put Your name on the line. You have revealed Your Essence to us! Your Word has proven itself.

Seven Principles of Prayer – Matthew 6:5-8

1. Prayer must be offered by the Believer Priest [*John 15:7*]. Only believers have the right of prayer. [A consistent prayer life].
2. Prayer must comply with the Faith-Rest Technique. “Believing” [*Matthew 21:22; Mark 11:24; James 1:5-6*].

3. Prayer must be offered according to God's will to be effective [**1 John 5:14**]. To know the will of God, you must know the Word of God. Effective prayer warriors know doctrine.
4. Prayer must be offered in the status of the filling of the Holy Spirit [**Ephesians 6:18**].
5. Prayer must be offered with thanksgiving [**Colossians 4:2, worship**].
6. Prayer offered in carnality cannot be heard, unless the content is confession of sin [**1 John 1:9; Psalm 66:18; James 4:2-3**].
7. Prayer must be offered on a grace basis [**Hebrews 4:16**]. There never will be a time when any believer earns or deserves the right to be heard. Prayer is approaching the throne of GRACE.

Matthew 6:5-8 (NASB)

⁵ ***1**"When you pray, you are not to be ²like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners ³so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they ⁴have their reward in full.*

1. **When you pray** – means you are to pray often (everyday) many times a day. The language says “when you are always praying” as you are supposed to do as a Christian. Subjunctive mood which means maybe you will, maybe you won't. It is your decision [**1 Thessalonians 5:17**].
2. **like the hypocrites** – Jesus is removing their mask.
3. **so that they may be seen by men** – this is their motive; to impress someone. Some people believe that if they impress people, God will be impressed with them. Prayer is a grace principle not works, ability, or things we do. The greatest way to evaluate your prayer life is how much you pray privately.
4. **have their reward in full** – Greek: “full payment”; self-reward (no reward from God). They have been seen and heard by men and that is their reward.

⁶ ***"But you, ¹when you pray, go into your ²inner room, close your door and ³pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done ⁴in secret will reward you.***

1. **when you pray** – always praying.
2. **inner room** – private place where you cannot be seen.

3. *pray to your Father* – prayer is always addressed to God, the Father.

A. The address of prayer is to the Father [*Matthew 6:6, 9; Luke 11:2; Ephesians 3:14, 5:20; 1 Peter 1:17*]

B. The channel approach and the authority for prayer is in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ [*John 14:13, 14; 15:16; 16:23, 24*].

C. The transmission of the approach is through the power of the Holy Spirit [*Ephesians 6:18; Romans 8:26, 27*].

4. *in secret will reward you* – How? By listening to you [*John 15:7*].

¹ "And when you are praying, do not use ²*meaningless repetition* ³*as the Gentiles do*, for they ⁴*suppose* that they will be heard for their many ⁵*words*.

1. *Verse 7* – the pitfalls to prayer.

2. *meaningless repetition* – means to utter senseless words.

3. *as the Gentiles do* – unbelievers. Like praying to false gods.

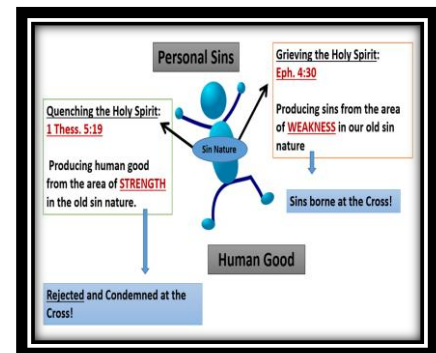
4. *suppose* – think [effective prayer requires it].

5. *words* – so be careful of 3 extremes.

A. Neglect

B. Highly emotional prayer

C. Ritual prayers



⁸ "So do not be like them; *for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him*.

1. *for your Father knows what you need* – God knows what you need before you ask.

Why pray if he knows before I ask? God does want to help and is waiting to help us, but our free will must give permission for Him to help, especially when we are under temptation and testing.

This is the format to follow!

A. Confession: Acknowledge our sin [*1 John 1:9; 1 Corinthians 11:31; Psalm 51:2-4*].

- B. Thanksgiving: Praise, adoration [*Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 3:16, 17; 4:2*].
- C. Intercession: To intercede for others [*Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 4:3*].
- D. Petition: Supplication – to convey our personal needs [*Philippians 4:6; Hebrews 4:16*].
- E. Conversation: And to have an intimate conversation with God.

Model Prayer - Matthew 6:9-13 (NASB)

Prayer is for Christian believers only. One can address God as Father only as a member of the family of God. *John 1:12; Galatians 3:26*

Prayer should be directed to God the Father. *Ephesians 5:20; Matthew 6:9*

Prayer should be made in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. *John 14:13*

The power of prayer is through ministry of the Holy Spirit. *Ephesians 6:18*

⁹₁ *Pray, ²then, in this way: ³Our Father who is in heaven, ⁴Hallowed be Your name.*

1. **Pray:** Prayer is to begin with an attitude of worship. Prayer is a grace provision of the Royal Priesthood, whereby the church age believer has the privilege to communicate directly with God. It is an expression of thought so both mentality and volition are involved. Prayer is not optional but a mandate as part of our priesthood.
2. **then, in this way:** An example, model, guide, pattern. Why? To keep us on track! Many people pray selfishly. They pray for their own will, not God's will. Prayer demands concentration and thought; it is not mindless activity. The question should not be "if I pray" but "how I should pray correctly?"
3. **Our Father who is in heaven:** Throne Room. What is in a name? There is not much in our names; a tag for the convenience of the mailman. When a person prays, he is surrendering his will to God. He is denying self-sufficiency. The word "Father" establishes a relationship – His Essence.
4. **Hallowed be Your name:** To be counted and treated as Holy. Treated as different.

¹⁰₁ *Your kingdom come. Your will be done, ²On earth as it is in heaven.*

1. ***Your kingdom come. Your will be done:*** As believers, our prayers fail because we fail in our spiritual life. We do not understand the plan or the will of God.
2. ***On earth as it is in heaven:*** A kingdom run with heavenly principles. The believer should pursue his prayer life with an intensity that overcomes obstacles.

¹¹ ¹ ***'Give us this day ²our daily bread.***

1. ***Give us this day:*** Faith/Rest Technique – moment by moment. Eliminates worry and reflects our total dependency upon God. Prayer should be the highest priority in your life after learning Bible doctrine. It is to be a habit, setting times to pray throughout the day. Manna – just enough for that day.
2. ***Our daily bread:*** Bread is the basic necessity of life, the symbol of all that is necessary for survival. Father, provide what I need for today to do what you want me to do. When you pray for the will of God to be done, it reflects a selfless soul that is obedient to the will of God.

¹¹² ² ***'And forgive us our debts, ³as we also have ⁴forgiven our debtors.***

1. ***Verse 12:*** You do not pray to become spiritual, you pray because you are spiritual, which is the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Prayer is the result of spiritual growth – it is not the cause of your spiritual growth.
2. ***And forgive us our debts:*** The word “debts” means dues-duties. That which is owed and is legally due i.e., to keep ones responsibilities. When you sin – confess it [what we owe God] because self-righteousness (arrogance) blinds people from realizing their sin and need of forgiveness.
3. ***as we also have:*** Past tense [already has forgiven]. It reflects the genuine humility of a soul that is dependent upon God to forgive.
4. ***forgiven our debtors:*** Those who have sinned against us. The believer recognizes that he is in need of forgiveness and needs to forgive others who have sinned against him.

¹³ ¹ ***'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [²For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]***

1. ***'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil:*** God does not tempt us with sin. “Do not allow us to be led into temptation” [do not leave us there]. Ask God to deliver us when we are tempted. But God will test you! God will allow a

certain situation to occur (and then will rescue you from that situation] i.e., God who creates both the source of testing and the strength to endure it.

2. ***For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*** You will bring about your ultimate goal. Power [ability to do so], glory [You will be worshipped forever]. We can be part of that plan now and be blessed or we can reject [disobey; do our own thing] and dishonor You now [only to glorify You in heaven].

The Lord's Prayer – John 17

John 17:1-26 (NASB)

¹ *Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, ² even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. ³ "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. ⁴ "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵ "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. ⁶ "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. ⁷ "Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; ⁸ for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me. ⁹ "I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours; ¹⁰ and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹ "I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are. ¹² "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled. ¹³ "But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves. ¹⁴ "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ "I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. ¹⁸ "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in*

truth.²⁰ "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word;²¹ that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.²² "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;²³ I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.²⁴ "Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.²⁵ "O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me;²⁶ and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

A Close Examination of Matthew 26:36-46

1. What can we learn about prayer from a close examination of Matthew 26:36-49?

Matthew 26:36-39 (NASB)

³⁶ Then Jesus *came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and *said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."³⁷ And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed.³⁸ Then He *said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me."³⁹ And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."

Matthew 26:40-41 (NASB)

⁴⁰ And He *came to the disciples and *found them sleeping, and *said to Peter, "So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour?⁴¹ "Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Matthew 26:42-43 (NASB)

⁴² He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done."⁴³ Again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.

Matthew 26:44 (NASB)

And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more.

Matthew 26:45-46 (NASB)

⁴⁵ Then He *came to the disciples and *said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the

hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ “Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!”

2. The Gethsemane prayer of Jesus also shows problems with believers’ difficulties in developing a private prayer life, let alone an unceasing prayer life. Jesus interrupted His private unceasing prayer three times to minister to His disciples. We learn some things from the disciples’ difficulty in development of a prayer life.

- A. In the first temptation: Jesus taught us that temptation is a major battle when “*the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*” **Matthew 26:41**
- B. In the second temptation: Jesus taught us that the natural causes could be a hindrance. “*sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.*” **Matthew 26:43**
- C. In the third temptation: Jesus taught us that in spite of our lack of prayer, the plan of God continues. “*Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.*” **Matthew 26:45**

This resulted in them not being connected with the moment of conflict or prepared by the will of God for the initial assault.

Jesus said: “*arise, let us be going; behold the one who betrays Me is at hand.*”

3. Prayer is an opportunity to bring our will into line with God’s plan.

Did Abraham change God’s mind? Of course not. The more likely answer is that God changed Abraham’s mind. Abraham knew that God is just and that He punishes sin, but he may have wondered about God’s mercy. Abraham seemed to be probing God’s mind to see how merciful He really was. He left his conversation with God convinced that God was both kind and fair. Our prayers will not change God’s mind, but they may change ours just as Abraham’s prayer changed his. Prayer helps us better understand the mind of God. **Genesis 18:16-33**

4. Prayer is an opportunity to demonstrate our trust in God.

Why did God let Abraham question His justice and intercede for a wicked city? Abraham knew that God must punish sin, but he also knew from experience that God is merciful to sinners. God knew there were not ten righteous people in the city, but He was merciful enough to allow Abraham to intercede. He was also merciful enough to help Lot, Abraham’s nephew, get out of Sodom before it was destroyed. God does not take pleasure in destroying the wicked, but He must punish sin. He is both just and merciful. We should be thankful that God’s mercy extends to us.

Conclusion:

Prayer reflects our dependence upon God!

There Are Many Reasons Why Prayer is Not Answered

1. The fundamental reason why prayer is not answered is because the believer is under the control of the old sin nature. In a state of sin, your prayers cannot be heard or answered.
 - A. General reasons for failure in prayer are always related to carnality, being out of fellowship; residence in the cosmic system. **Psalm 66:18** *If I cherish iniquity in my stream of consciousness, the Lord will not listen to me*” Cherishing iniquity – means not rebounding (confess sins).
 - B. Rebound is a recovery procedure.
 - C. Rebound must precede all divine mandates of prayer whether the mandates are in the Old or New Testament.

In carnality, the believer grieves (**Ephesians 4:30**) and quenches the Spirit (**1 Thessalonians 5:19**) and your prayers cannot be heard.

The only prayer which can be heard is rebound, which is the private confession of your sins to God; in that sense, it is a prayer.

What the righteousness of God approves (personal prayer on behalf of self and others) the justice of God answers through the love of God expressed through the grace of God when the believer has rebounded.

What the righteousness of God disapproves (the believer praying in a state of sin or in perpetual carnality); the justice of God does not answer. But the love of God approves the solution and the means of effective prayer through the grace of God.

Psalm 66:19-20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ *But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer.* ²⁰ *Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer, Nor His mercy from me! Between verse 18 and 19 is rebound.*

2. Another reason for the malfunction of prayer is always related to the believer's rejection of Bible doctrine.

Whatever your reason for rejecting doctrine, it means you have no understanding of the mechanics of prayer. Only Bible doctrine teaches the mechanics of prayer; only Bible doctrine teach the will of God. Your prayers must comply with the will of God and must follow the precisely correct protocol procedure for prayer.

3. Indifference to or rejection of Bible doctrine produces three categories of ignorance (lack of knowledge) which guarantees the malfunction of your prayer life.
 - A. Ignorance because of indifference to doctrine.
 - B. Ignorance because of wrong priorities. If wrong priorities persist in your spiritual life, you will become a loser believer with no prayer life.
 - C. Ignorance because of the arrogance complex of sins: jealousy, bitterness, vindictiveness, hatred, self-pity, abnormal ambition, abnormal competition, slander, maligning, judging, revenge, etc. Arrogant believers never get through to the throne of grace.
4. The positive side of why prayer is not answered: ***1 John 3:22 (NASB)*** and *whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.*
 - A. Therefore, prayer is related to your fulfillment of the protocol plan of God and the execution of the Christian way of life.

Prayer becomes more and more effective as we execute His mandates.

You can have effective prayer right from the start of your spiritual life if you execute His mandates. But to become a great prayer warrior demands your daily intake of doctrine and the daily use of the problem-solving devices you have learned. Then you do not depend upon others to solve your problems but you handle your own problems from the doctrinal techniques you have been taught.
 - B. To do “*what is pleasing in His sight*” describes spiritual adulthood when the believer reaches the peak in his prayer life.
 - C. Hence, failure to execute His mandates and to attain spiritual adulthood (“*do what is pleasing in His sight*”) impedes, obstructs, inhibits, and undermines all effective prayer.
5. Lack of domestic tranquility. ***1 Peter 3:7 (NASB)*** *You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.*

Personal love for people is not a problem-solving device. Only knowledge of doctrine and resultant virtue can solve domestic problems.

A. Failure in your marital life spills over into failure in your prayer life. Failure in your prayer life simply reflects failure in your spiritual life.

B. Believers in marriage need to pray for each other.

1 Peter 4:7-8 (NASB) ⁷ The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. ⁸ Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

The least you can do is have virtue love within your own family.

6. Of all the categories of sin and carnality which hinder effective prayer, arrogance is the number one cause of failure, not only in prayer but in the spiritual life.

It is the number one reason why people are not teachable. We produce our own arrogance without any help from anyone else, for we all have an old sin nature which daily, knocks at the door and says, "How about a little arrogance?"

Job 35:12-13 (NASB) ¹² "There they cry out, but He does not answer Because of the pride of evil men. ¹³ "Surely God will not listen to an empty cry, Nor will the Almighty regard it.

7. Prayer is not answered because of lust, criminality, jealousy, and false motivation which neutralizes prayer. **James 4:2-3 (NASB) (address to believers)** ² *You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

- A. The point is that lust and murder, jealousy and fighting are the wrong ways to get what you want. Ask! But then, if you ask from wrong motives, you won't get it either.
- B. Lust is a wrong motive for prayer. When you do not get what you want, you commit murder in frustration; the failure of your prayer life has resulted in criminality.
- C. Jealousy is also a wrong motive for prayer. If you are jealous of your friend or loved one, your relationship will never work because you are constantly trying to bend them your way.
- D. Since you cannot obtain through jealousy, you fight and quarrel. Lust and jealousy as wrong motives, both come from wanting things for your pleasure.
- E. The whole system of failure in prayer becomes failure in the protocol plan of God.

8. Malfunction of the faith-rest drill in prayer means the malfunction of effective prayer.

- A. **Mark 11:24 (NASB)** *"Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you.*
- B. With the malfunction of the faith-rest drill and prayer, your life eventually malfunctions. Prayer is an index to your spiritual life. Prayer is something that all believers are commanded to do. If you are not praying correctly or fail in prayer for any reason, that means there is some problem in your spiritual life; there is some kink, some syndrome, some arrogance or some problem. The problem will overflow to every area of your life.
- 9. Lack of obedience is another reason for prayer not being answered. If the believer does not keep God's commandments, their prayers are in vain. If the believer does things that are not pleasing to God, their prayers are null and void.

1 John 3:22 (NASB) *and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.*

Ten Problem Solving Devices

Prayer Is Not A Problem Solving Device, But You Need To Saturate The Ten Problem Solving Devices With Prayer.

Remember that in making a Biblical decision, you have the Ten Problem Solving Devices that God has given to help you deal with the problems of life.

1. **1 John 1:9** **Acknowledging your sins to God the Father.** Confession of known sin.
2. **Ephesians 5:18** **Result of Rebound.** Filling/Controlled by the Holy Spirit. You want the Holy Spirit to guide you in life then problems are being solved. YOU DO NOT WANT EMOTIONS TO LEAD YOU.
3. **1 Peter 5:7** **Faith/Rest Drill.** Relax and let God. This is leaning (standing) **Hebrews 4:1, 10-11** on the promises of God. Trust His Word and all His promises.
4. **James 4:6** **Apply the Grace of God.** Living by Grace and not Law. You deal and live life based on Grace not by rules. You

treat others in grace as God treats you. This teaches us how to deal with people.

5. ***Romans 12:1***

Study and Application of God's Word. Making God's Word a priority. Familiarity with Bible Doctrine, (the Mind of Christ). Teaches us how to live. You need to know what God says...you need to have Bible Doctrine resident within you (the only way the Holy Spirit can bring to mind what you know) therefore you MUST KNOW SOMETHING.

6. ***Philippians 1:21***

Understanding God's Purpose for Your Life.

Understanding that God has a plan...a purpose for your life. Now your life has meaning. You are where God wants you to be and doing what He wants you to do.

7. ***Deuteronomy 6:5;***
because of all
 1 Peter 1:8

Personal Love for God. You love God the Father

that He has done for you. Learning to love God as we grow to know Him by studying. Love is based on a relationship (you need to know Him....putting Him first). You do not really love someone until you know Him.

8. ***James 2:8***

Love for God and Love for Humanity. You love someone because of who and what you are, not because of who and what they are or do to you. Loving others as God loves us. This takes our eyes off people and on God...you see that person through God's eyes.

9. ***John 15:11***

Understanding Where True Happiness Originates.

Absolute Happiness. You have inner peace and happiness in all situations. Your happiness then is based on Him and not on the details of life or other people. You are not controlled by the circumstances in life, but based on what God is doing.

10. *Ephesians 3:19*

Make Christ the Priority in Your Life. This will establish what is really important in life. Christ needs to be FIRST.

What Causes Un-forgiveness?

It begins with an injury; some form of rejection. He said this; he did that. As a result, resentment toward that person grows and immediately turns into a debt. A debt is an obligation when you think someone owes you something.

1. An apology – you hurt me and need to admit it to me and yourself.
2. You should have done something and did not.

Until the debt is paid, we punish those who “owe” us by withholding love, acceptance, trust, respect, kindness and even friendship [you will not have my acceptance] until we feel they have repaid us for the wrong done.

What is Forgiveness?

The act of setting one free from an obligation to you because of a wrong done against you [to dismiss, to release, to leave or abandon]. It is saying to someone, “you no longer owe me” or “your debt is paid”.

The Opposite of Forgiveness

Resentment. We fail to forgive; we fail to release, or we fail to dismiss the debt! We are saying “No, you still owe me, or no I will not forget it; I want to be paid!”

Prayer - Hebrews 4:16

1. ***“Therefore let us go with confidence to the throne of grace,”*** We have a High Priest Who can sympathize with our weaknesses. We have the privilege and honor of going to God the Father in prayer.
2. As a Royal Priesthood we have the right of direct access to God the Father in prayer. We do not have to go through a priest to get to God, or through angels, or “saints,” and especially not through Mary, the mother of the humanity of Christ.
3. We have the right of direct access to God the Father through One Person only—our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is why we are instructed to ask in His name, ***John 15:16***, ***“You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.”***

4. We can go to God the Father in prayer at any time, but especially when we are under temptation and testing to ask for His help to say 'no' to the temptation and to get through the testing.
5. Our Lord, since He has already 'been there and done that', is able to provide us with the exact help we need through the Bible doctrine in our soul and the filling of the Holy Spirit.
6. We do not have to go to God in a state of fear and trembling about whether or not He will help. We can go to Him in absolute confidence that He will help, because He is more than willing to help and is just waiting for the opportunity to help.
7. You might be asking yourself, "Why doesn't God just help us without us asking, since He knows all things and wants to help?"

There is this little problem called the Angelic Conflict and the resolution of that conflict is through the use of human free will.

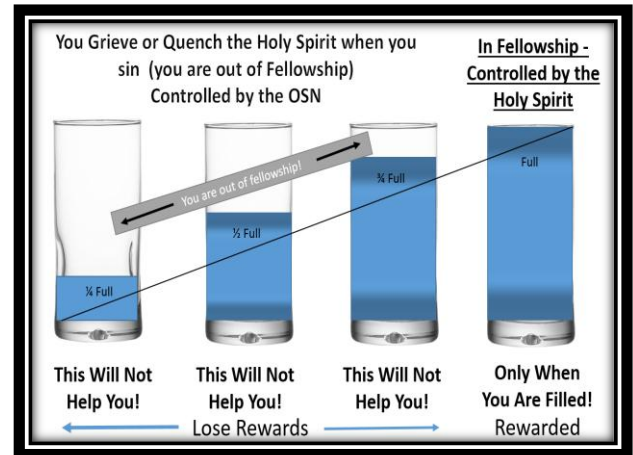
God does want to help us, but our free will must give Him permission to help, especially when we are under temptation and testing.

8. Prayer is not designed to get us out of trouble but to express our helplessness, our humility, our total dependence on God rather than on human ability and power. Prayer is our recognition and orientation to His grace and His mercy toward us.
 - A. We do not use prayer to hire God to do what we want done. Too many believers use prayer to get their own way, not God's way. Prayer must be compatible with God's will and God's way, not our will and our way.
 - B. Prayer is not what we want but what God wants for us. Prayer is our recognition and orientation to the grace of God.
 - C. Prayer was never designed to fulfill our lusts and desires, but prayer was designed to fulfill the will, plan, and purpose of God for our lives and to give us access to heaven while still living on earth. Too many prayers are expressions of what you want, not what God wants. To express the will of God in your prayers, you have to come to know what the will of God is or how to ask for the will of God instead of your own will.
 - D. For this reason, our Lord Jesus Christ as our High Priest makes intercession for us at the right hand of the Father, ***Hebrews 7:24-25***, "*On the other hand, He abides forever; consequently, He holds His priesthood permanently. Therefore,*

He is able to deliver completely those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for us.”

9. ***“in order that we may receive mercy”***

- A. The writer of Hebrews encourages and urges us to go to God the Father for help when we are in a state of weakness, so that we may depend totally upon Him for whatever we need (grace is total dependence upon God).
- B. When we go to the Father in total dependence upon Him, we receive mercy. We receive mercy every time. God the Father has never once failed to be merciful to anyone who has gone to Him and asked for His help.
- C. The reason why believers often do not receive mercy or grace from God is because they ask with wrong motives, ***James 4:3***, “*You ask and do not receive because you ask for yourselves with wrong motives, in order that you may squander it on your pleasures.*”
- D. When we are out of fellowship with God, everything we want is for a selfish motive, that is, a wrong motive. When we are in fellowship with God, everything we want is for the greater glorification of God and His plan, and we receive mercy.



10. ***“and find grace resulting in well-timed help.”***

- A. God has many purposes for our lives, and one of the main purposes is stated here: *that we may receive mercy and find grace resulting in well-timed help.*
- B. This grace that we find in our lives in time of pressure, testing, temptation, and adversity is exactly what we need at the right time. God’s grace is always provided at the right time in the right amount for all the right reasons.
- C. We can have absolute confidence in the fact that God will provide help when we need it most from His mercy on the basis of His grace at the exact right time. God’s timing is perfect. His grace is never late to do any good. All we have to do is go to the throne of grace and ask.

- D. Our Lord did not leave us in Satan's cosmic system so that we could constantly fail and suffer under temptation and testing, but so that we could demonstrate our dependence upon the grace and mercy of God. We receive that mercy and find that grace exactly when we need God's help.
- E. Temptation and testing happen so that we have the opportunity of going to God and asking for His help. He can give that help and demonstrate His grace and mercy to the fallen angels, who said that He had no grace and had no mercy.

Three Things Stirred the Disciples To Ask Jesus to Teach Them to Pray

1. Jesus often prayed, and He emphasized prayer as one of the greatest needs of human life. He always insisted that it was the source of His strength in living and serving God. Therefore, the disciples were aroused to hunger after the same strength for life and service. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray.
2. Jesus prayed as a Son to His Father, and such intimacy stirred the disciples to want the same kind of relationship with God.
3. John had taught His disciples to pray. It was a common practice for a teacher to instruct his disciples in prayer. Jesus' disciples used this as the basis to ask Him: "*Lord, teach us to pray.*"

It is a sin not to pray - **1 Samuel 12:23 (KJV)** *Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:*

A Few Good Examples

1. Obedience: **1 Thessalonians 5:17** *Pray without ceasing.*
2. Fellowship: **Jeremiah 29:13 (KJV)** *And ye shall seek me, and find [me], when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*
3. **Mark 1:35 (KJV)** *And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.*
4. Produces Results: **James 5:16 (KJV)** *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.*
5. Prayer is Vital to Spiritual Growth: **Philippians 1:9 (KJV)** *And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and [in] all judgment; That ye*

may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Conclusion: Remember, for the first 4000 years or more, no one could go directly to God – they had to go through a Priest and some form of tradition to get to God.

NOT SO in the New Testament. As a Believer Priest you can represent yourself to God – a privilege that is not taken advantage of by many Christians and we certainly take for granted.

Prayer Petitions and Prayer Answered

1. Petition Granted but Desire not Granted

Psalm 106:15 “and he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul.”

Example: children of Israel in the wilderness

Petition answered: flesh to eat.

Numbers 11:4-6, 13

Desired not answered: happiness

2. Petition not Granted but Desire Granted

Example: Abraham praise for God to spare Sodom and Gomorrah

Petition not answered: spare Sodom and Gomorrah

Genesis. 18:32-33

Desire answered: Lot’s safety.

3. Petition Granted and Desire Granted

Example: Jesus prayed

Petition answered: raised Lazarus from the dead.

Desire answered: bystanders to believe. *John 11:41–45.*

4. Petition not Granted but Desire Granted

In *Genesis 17:18*, Abraham asked that Ishmael might be his established heir.

His petition was denied but his desire for a son and an heir was later granted by the birth of Isaac.

5. Petition Granted and Desire Granted

In **1 Kings 18**, Elijah prayed that God would destroy the altar on which an offering to Baal had been made.

His desire was that God would be glorified.

His petition and desire would be granted.

Prayer and Your Negative Viewpoint

1. Prayer is a spiritual gift and I don't have this gift. Not true. All believers are Believer Priests, therefore all can pray.
2. Prayer is not optional, it is commanded by God. In a sense, **1 John 1:9** is prayer.
3. I don't have time to pray. Principal: you don't have time **not** to pray if you don't have time. The details of life are enslaving you.
4. I never see the results of my prayers. So what? It is God who answers them according to the Word of God.
5. My mind wonders when others pray. Prayer takes doctrine. It takes to discipline which doctrine gives. Take in doctrine and receive a strong mental attitude.

God's Guideline for Life

1. What I think – God's people:

Colossians 3:1-2 (NASB)

¹ Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

2. What I do – work for the Lord:

Colossians 3:23 (NASB)

²³ *Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,*

3. How I treat people – when I produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit:

Galatians 5:21-22 (NASB)

²¹ *envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

4. How I am – thankful:

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ *in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

Prayer - Philippians 1:4

1. Prayer is generally a time for happiness in your soul.
2. You are talking to God and He is listening to you and willing to help and do whatever you want, as long as it is compatible with His plan.
3. Shouldn't that make us extremely happy? Of course it should. So why aren't believers happy when they pray? Because they don't believe God is listening. They don't believe God will do anything.
4. They don't know how to pray or what to pray. Could they are really be out of fellowship with God when they do pray and don't even realize they are out of fellowship?
5. Your memories of other believers who care about you should produce happy memories in your soul. These memories should motivate your prayer for others, just as their memories of you should motivate their prayers for you.
6. We should pray for those who persecute us just as our Lord taught, but even more so, we should pray for those who love and support us.
7. Happiness is a mental attitude that should accompany prayer. Prayer to God is not incoherent emotional nonsense that God, you, or anyone else could not understand.

8. God wants us to be happy, even when we pray. If you really trust God and believe that He can and does answer your prayers, then you will be tremendously happy, knowing that God will fulfill His will in blessing other believers. He does so because you asked Him to do so. How could that not make you happy?

Prayer: False Concepts

1. **Traditional lingo doesn't make a prayer acceptable.** There is no such thing as a holy or spiritual language.
2. **Traditional thinking:** (human viewpoint) such as thinking it is more effective to kneel than to sit or to stand. Also, that prayer is more effective if done in a church, or in some "sacred" geographical location.

It is impossible to measure the changes brought about by prayer.

How Do You Know When It's time to Pray?

Have you ever had anyone come to you and say, "Tell me, how do you know when it's time to pray?" I mean, our stomachs growl when it's time to eat.

Our eyes start closing when it's time to sleep. When our feelings get hurt, it's time for tears, With a new birth, it's time to care.

People will often tell us, quite so, When it's time to come or stay or go.

But how do you know - When it's time to pray? Does an alarm go off next to your bed? Or is there a clanging inside your head?

Do your eyes start blinking, a horn start blowing?

Or do you listen for a rooster crowing?

Just what is your way of knowing - When it's time to pray?

With me, I find its time to pray

At the beginning and ending of each day.

And when I'm sick and feeling bad,

Or scared, or lonely, or lost, or sad.

When the bills blow in like sand, I seek a touch of the Master's hand.

When I need patience, hope and peace And an abiding love that will not cease.

When I'm thankful for all there is - That now is mine, and yet is His.

Gladness, sadness, joy and grief - We share in prayer.

And it's my belief that whenever my heart has something to say

That's how I know when it's time to pray. – *Unknown*

Something to Think About

There are many blessings in life that are contingent on prayer, human volition and our faithfulness to pray. You see, God not only knows what is going to happen, He also knows what could happen.

James 4:2 says “*because we ask not*”

God has set aside X number of blessings that are contingent on prayer. We will all probably be shocked when we get to heaven and see the things God had for us that we did not get because we did not ask. Or, maybe we did not grow spiritually mature enough to handle what God had in store for us.

Guidelines for Group Prayer

1. ***Be conversational:*** Use simple and direct language. Just talk to God as you would talk to a father, but also with reverence for who God is, the Lord of the universe.
2. ***Be spontaneous:*** Pray as God leads, not with vain repetitions and memorized phrases.
3. ***Be clear:*** Loud enough so others can hear, understand, and share in what is being said. (*1 Corinthians 14:16*)
4. ***Be wise:*** Do not use prayer to air sin, yours or others, or gossip in the name of a "prayer request ". Do not preach, exhort or answer or get back at someone in a prayer meeting through your prayer. I have seen this happen, but such ceases to be prayer.
5. ***Be Silent:*** Do not get nervous between audible prayers. Use that time to keep on praying silently.
6. ***Be Focused:*** Learn awareness of Him and not others.
7. ***Be on the Team:*** Prayer is for every believer, not just a few.

Things We **SHOULD NOT DO** When We Pray Publicly

1. Do not pray "*to be seen*" by men, to draw attention to yourself.

Matthew 6:1 "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

Matthew 6:5 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

Matthew 6:6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

2. Do not pray in a babbling or repetitious manner.

Matthew 6:7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

Proverbs 10:19 - When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.

Ecclesiastes 5:2 - Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.

- ### 3. Do not publicly confess sin, either your own nor anyone else's. Confession of sin is a personal matter between the believer and God only (*Psalms 51:1*). Publicly confessing sin is a violation of God's Word, and can lead other believers to sin as well (mental attitude sins such as lust, anger, jealousy, judging; sins of the tongue such as gossiping and maligning; overt sins based on bitterness, legalism and self-righteousness).
- ### 4. Do not publicly gossip about another believer by disguising it as a prayer request for that person. For example, do not say, "I think we should pray for Joe, who is having a problem with drinking right now." Be very careful and discerning about what you share publicly concerning someone else, always safeguarding their privacy. This may mean that only you can intercede for that person's situation.

PRAYER ABUSE

Using prayer in ways for which it was not designed by God, such as:

1. Using prayer as a way for you to direct God to fulfill your plans for gaining material things. Rather, prayer should prepare you to receive His solution to your needs.
2. Using prayer as a means of controlling other people's lives. God will not violate the free will of others to answer your request (for example, praying that God will make someone love you, or that God will somehow make a person believe in Christ).
3. Using prayer as a substitute to replace the consistent study of the Word of God. Prayer is not designed to take the place of learning God's word (***John 15:7-10***). Many people pray for things that the Bible tells us are acquired in some other way. For example, many pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit when the Bible teaches that this results from confessing sin. People may also pray for wisdom, but wisdom can only come from learning God's Word.
4. Using prayer as a substitute for exercising our spiritual gift. Every believer receives at least one spiritual gift at the moment of salvation to be used for God (***1 Corinthians 12:11***). Prayer is not a substitute for a believer learning what that spiritual gift is and using it in the way God desires.
5. Using prayer to replace showing forth the fruit of the Spirit in our lives (***Galatians 5:22-23***). These include virtues such as love, patience and kindness towards others.
6. Using prayer to compensate for failures to function in other areas of our lives. We are responsible for our actions and decisions. Praying does not replace the need for self-control nor self-discipline in our lives.
7. Using prayer as a replacement for witnessing for Christ.
8. Using prayer in place of love and faithfulness to God.
9. Using prayer as a substitute for love, faithfulness and integrity toward our family.
10. Using prayer to replace the attention and care of our spouse's needs.

Summation

A Simple Concept

Prayer is as simple as a child making known its wants to its parents.

Organized and Structured

Prayer does have order, structure and guidelines to follow to be effective in your

Christian way of life.

Be Natural Before God

Remember, always be yourself (natural) when praying (communicating) with God. Tell the Father whatever is on your heart and mind with whatever words are most natural to you.

Understanding the Proper Protocol for Prayer

You must know what God says in His Word about prayer if you want to use it properly and receive maximum benefits from it.

Communicating in Prayer with God

You will spend time in prayer with God when you have knowledge about God from His Word, serving and glorifying Him.

We pray (or should) because we are commanded to pray.

Prayer is not optional but a mandate as part of our Royal Priesthood.

The question should be not “if I pray” but “how should I pray correctly?”