

# PRAYER

In the Christian walk, you must learn to develop a relationship with Jesus Christ. This walk is not a list of rules, but is one of cultivating a friendship with your Lord and Saviour. You accomplish this through prayer. Prayer is communication with God. God speaks to us through His Word and we speak to God through prayer. Prayer is the most common element exemplified by saints in the Bible. Many brothers and sisters of old spent hours on their knees communing with their heavenly Father. Brothers like David, Daniel, and Paul prayed and fasted for weeks to know the mind of God and accomplish the work of God. Jesus, our perfect example, prayed all night before selecting His twelve disciples (**Luke 6:12-16**). He prayed another time and His countenance was changed (**Luke 9:29**). Nothing worthwhile or lasting is accomplished unless God's hand moves, and nothing moves the hand of God like our sincere, fervent prayer!

A close personal relationship with the Father will only come about through prayer, and learning how to pray will only come through the believer's desire. When the disciples saw Jesus praying they asked Him to teach them to pray, and He did (**Luke 11:1-4**). As you begin to pray and walk with the Lord in the light of His Word, you will learn to do all things together. The bond of love will grow and a true relationship will develop between you and your Father. You will run together, work together, fellowship together, and even cry together through prayer. You will experience blessing after blessing and find a "friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (**Pro 18:24**).

## I. PRAYER IS A NECESSITY

- **Phi 4:6** (Memory Verse) - In everything by prayer let your request be known to God.

**NOTE:** Prayer is the solution to worry! "Careful" means to be excessively cautious and concerned about matters. Sincere prayer brings the peace of God to our circumstances, and safeguards our hearts and minds through the circumstances. (**Phi 4:7**)

- **Heb 4:15-16** (Memory Verse) - We should come "boldly" to the throne that we may find mercy and grace in time of need.

**NOTE:** We should not be shy or timid to come to our Father. We must understand our position in Christ that we are seated in heavenly places (**Eph 2:6**). We have direct access to Him to obtain mercy for our sins and grace for our needs.

- **Eph 6:10-18** - We wrestle not against flesh and blood. We must learn to resist Satan as a good soldier armed for battle. Therefore, armed with these essentials; truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God, we can have power in prayer. The armor gives us confidence before God as we pray one for another with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.

## II. NOTHING IS TOO HARD FOR THE LORD

- ❑ **Gen 18:14** - The Lord's own statement to Sarah was. "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?"
- ❑ **Jer 32:17, 27** - Jeremiah was confident that there was nothing too hard for the Lord.

**NOTE:** God created the heavens and the earth, is there anything He can't do?

- ❑ **Jer 33:3** - The Lord will show you great and mighty things.
- ❑ **Mark 9:23** (Memory Verse) - "... all things are possible to him that believeth."
- ❑ **Luke 1:37** - "... with God nothing shall be impossible."
- ❑ **Rom 8:32** – If it wasn't too hard for God to give up His Son, then it is not too hard for God to "freely give us all things."

## III. YOU MUST CALL IN TRUTH

- ❑ **Psa 145:18-19** (Memory Verse) - You must call in truth. Compare **John 4:21-24**.

**NOTE:** Many people call on God but not in truth. One who is mistaken in truth may sincerely call and not be heard. A person must be in Christ before his prayers will be regarded, except the prayer of repentance (**John 9:31**). Cornelius' prayers came up before God as a "memorial" (**Acts 10:4**). Normally, a memorial is something done in remembrance of someone dead. Cornelius was spiritually dead then (**Psa 25:14**).

- ❑ **Pro 28:9** - He that does not regard God's Law "...even his prayer is an abomination."
- ❑ **Jer 29:11-14** - When you seek Him with your whole heart in truth He will respond to your petition.

## IV. YOU MUST ASK

- ❑ **Jam 4:1-2** - First, you must learn to ask. "You have not because you ask not."
- ❑ **Psa 2:8; Jam 5:16-18** - Ask. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

**DEFN:** "Fervent" – Very warm, glowing, passionate, ardent, earnest, excited, animated, vehement.

**NOTE:** Jabez fervently asked the Lord for three specific things; an enlarged coast, God's presence, and deliverance from evil. (**1 Chr 4:9-10**) The Lord heard and granted his petition.

- **Matt 7:7-11; Luke 11:9-13** – Ask, Seek, Knock

**NOTE:** Asking should always be according to God's will. Seeking involves effort if we are to explore God's opportunities in our lives. Knocking always requires waiting for a response for God to open the right door.

- **Matt 21:21-22** - Ask in faith and you will receive.
- **Mark 11:22-24** - Jesus promises that if you believe, you will receive.
- **John 15:7-11; John 16:23-24** - Ask "that your joy might be full".
- **Job 5:8-9** - Job sought the Lord because he knew that He does great and unsearchable things.
- **Psa 81:10-13** - God invites you to open up your mouth as a bird wanting fed.

**NOTE:** The desire to pray is stirred when a need is seen. The greatest reason that the saints do not pray is that they are blind to the needs. Their hearts are cold and insensitive. They do not understand the battle that they are in and thus are indifferent about prayer. When we have a major bill to pay, it only takes a little faith to cause us to drop to our knees. It is not difficult to seek God when we see a need.

- **1 John 5:14-15** - We must ask according to His will, not our selfish will. If we know Him, we will know His will.

**NOTE:** A man must mature in Christ to look beyond his own burdens and begin to help lift the burden of others through prayer. Eventually his heart will enlarge to the point where he clearly sees another's burden (people, nations, etc.) and will stand in the gap through prayer, fulfilling the law of Christ. (**Gal 6:2**)

## **V. HOW TO PRAY**

- **Matt 6:5-6** - Do not pray to be seen of men. Enter into your closet of prayer and shut the door.

**NOTE:** In **Matt 6:9-15**, Jesus taught them a "model prayer". You can pattern your prayers after it. Do not repeat it in vain repetition but notice all the essential elements of it.

- **Matt 6:7-8** - Do not use vain repetition, as do the heathen.

**NOTE:** Brethren should learn to vary their prayers. They must follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. Those who pray the same old way will not pray fervently. Watch for repetitious use of the same phrases, idioms, or names. It is better to say a few words with meaning than to "think they shall be heard for their much speaking." Often people use God's name as a punctuation mark. Address Him properly and not in vain repetition. Also, avoid the reciting of written prayers. There is not one line of

Scripture that teaches the use of pre-written prayers. Prayers should flow from the heart developed by the Spirit of God within us.

- **Matt 6:9** - Begin by addressing the Lord as your Father.

**NOTE:** You are His child by faith (**Gal 3:26**). Literally, you can call Him,

“Daddy”. “Abba” means “Daddy” in Hebrew (**Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6**).

- **John 14:12-14; John 16:23-24** - Pray to the Father in Jesus’ name.

**NOTE:** This is praying with the kingdom of God in mind understanding by who’s authority you are coming to the throne of grace and for who’s glory you are asking the petition.

- **Matt 6:10; 1 John 3:1-3; 2 Pet 3:9-13** - Pray with anticipation of His coming. The constant thought of His coming will cause you to purify your life by keeping your mind on eternal things instead of temporal things.

- **Matt 6:10; 2 Pet 1:2-4** - Pray pleading the promises that the Lord has given you.

**NOTE:** Learn to mark all the promises in your Bible with a “P” in the margin. As you recall them, it will give confidence when you pray. Faith is believing and trusting what He said!

- **Matt 6:10** - Pray for His will to be done in all matters.

- **Matt 6:11** - Pray for your daily needs.

**NOTE:** Most people begin to worry if they don’t have a month’s worth of food in the cupboards or if they don’t have money for a bill that is due in two weeks. Jesus tells us to daily ask for our provisions. Whether the need is gas money, rent, a phone bill, or groceries, nothing is too large or too small to seek His help. The faithful learn to daily ask for their needs and rest in God’s promise to provide.

- **Matt 6:12** - Confess your trespasses and ask for forgiveness.

- **Matt 6:13** - Pray daily to be delivered from temptation and evil.

- **Luke 11:5-13** - Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to fill you so that you can be an effective witness for Jesus Christ.

**NOTE:** The man wanted bread for sinners. Jesus taught this parable so we would seek the Lord for the power of the Holy Spirit. In verse 13, the Lord is not dealing with salvation, because the people in the context are already His children. He is dealing with the “filling of His Spirit” that is for boldness and power to witness to others (**Acts 4:31; Phi 1:19-20; Eph 4:18-20; Eph 6:18- 20**).

- **“ACTS”** acrostic pattern of prayer can be used as a memory aid.

**A - ADORATION** - Praise the Lord for who He is and what He has done. Read these Psalms and learn how to praise.

**Psa 8, 66, 86, 98, 103, 105, 106, 107, 116, 138, 139, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, & 150**

**C - CONFESSION** - Confess your sins.

- **1 John 1:9** - If you confess, He is faithful and just to forgive.

**NOTE:** The key is to acknowledge the sin before the Lord. In other words, you must agree with God that it is sin. If you do your part by confessing then He will do His part to cleanse you from all unrighteousness, because He is faithful.

- **Psa 32:5-6** - A godly man acknowledges his sin.
- **Psa 24:3-4** - No man ascends to the holy hill except “...he that hath clean hands and a pure heart;”
- **1 John 3:18-22** - If our hearts condemn us not, we have confidence with God.

**T - THANKSGIVING** - Show your thankfulness. Tell Him how much you appreciate what He has done for you.

- **Phi 4:6** - Pray with thanksgiving.
- **Luke 17:12-19** - One leper returned to give thanks, nine did not return. Which pattern will you follow?
- **1 Cor 15:57** - Give thanks for the victory given through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Eph 5:20** - Give thanks always for all things.
- **1 Thes 5:18** - In everything give thanks.
- **1 Thes 1:2** - Give thanks to God for others.
- **Eph 1:16** - Paul ceased not to give thanks for others.
- **Phi 1:3** - Thank God for your family in Christ.
- **Col 4:2** - Watch in prayer with thanksgiving.
- **Heb 13:15** - Offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

**S - SUPPLICATION** - Make your requests for others and then yourself.

**DEFN:** “Supplication” - An earnest, humble request. A petition delivered in sincerity and submission.

- **Eph 6:18** (Intentionally repeated) - Pray with supplication.
- **Phi 4:6** (Intentionally repeated) - Notice the supplication.
- **Psa 116:1; Psa 130:2; Psa 119:169-172** - God heard David's supplication.
- **1 Tim 2:1** - Supplications should be made for all men.
- **Acts 1:14** - Supplications were made in one accord.

## VI. WHEN TO PRAY

- **Mark 1:35** - Jesus rose up early in the morning to pray.
- **Psa 5:3** - David sought the Lord early in the morning.
- **Dan 6:10** - Daniel prayed three times a day as it was his custom.
- **Psa 55:17-22** – “Evening, morning, and at noon” cast your burdens upon the Lord.

**NOTE:** Those who don't set patterns of prayer in their life usually end up not praying much.

- **Psa 119:18** - Pray before you read your Bible, that He would open your eyes to His truth.
- **1 Tim 4:5-7** - Pray before you eat your meals, thanking your heavenly Father for your daily food (**John 6:11**).
- **1 Thes 5:17** - Pray without ceasing.

**NOTE:** Although it is good to have certain times set to pray, the true perspective of faith understands the Lord is always near. Therefore converse with Him as you go. Talk to Him while driving in your car, as you are walking down the hall, or as you are sitting on your sofa. Learn to communicate with Him anytime, anywhere. Make it a continual living relationship.

- **Col 4:2** (Intentionally repeated) - You should continue in prayer all the time.

**NOTE:** Jesus was always going off somewhere to pray (**Mark 6:46; Luke 6:12**).

- **Eph 6:18** (Intentionally repeated) – “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit ...for all saints”
- **Rom 12:12** - Pray to Him at any instant.

**NOTE:** When sudden needs arise or sudden fears confront you, pray!  
When Nehemiah was caught off guard, he prayed (**Neh 2:2-5**).

When Simon Peter was sinking, he prayed (**Matt 14:30**).

- **Psa 50:15** - Pray to Him when you are in trouble and He will deliver. Then you should give Him the glory.

**NOTE:** Jehoshaphat, in the midst of battle cried out for help and the Lord heard him (**2 Chr 18:30-32**).

- **Psa 34:1-6** - Call on Him in fearful times and He will deliver.

**NOTE:** Jehoshaphat was in a crisis and didn't know what to do. He cried unto the Lord and the Lord took up the battle (**2 Chr 20:3-18**). Asa did the same thing (**2 Chr 14:9-12**). Then note the example of Christ (**Heb 5:7**).

## **VII. FAILURE TO PRAY BRINGS FAILURE**

- **Gen 3:1-8** - No prayer at a crucial time brought death to all.
- **Jos 7:1-6** - Joshua and the elders failed to seek God for direction until after the defeat at the city of Ai. Sin was in the camp and they did not see it.

**NOTE:** After prayer and dealing with the sin in the camp, the Lord used the defeat to bring victory (**Jos 8:1-29**).

- **Jos 9:1-14** - Joshua and the men asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord and were deceived by the Gibeonites. The Gibeonites were a thorn in Israel's side all their days. This is the end of compromise and prayerlessness.
- **Luke 22:40-46** - The disciples fell asleep and failed to pray. Then they were seriously tempted and fell.

**NOTE:** Jesus warned them before they were tempted to pray that they enter not into temptation. (**Luke 22:40**)

- **Matt 26:31-46** - Peter was bold in the flesh, but without prayer was weak and seriously fell by denying the Lord. (**1 Cor 10:12**)

## **VIII. MEN SHOULD KEEP PRAYING**

- **Luke 18:1-8** - KEEP PRAYING! Jesus gave this parable to teach that you should not faint in praying. Men ought "always" to pray.

**NOTE:** Some teach that great faith is demonstrated by praying for something only once and waiting for the answer, but that is not the pattern that the Scriptures teach.

- **Luke 11:5-10** - This parable teaches that a man who demonstrates "importunity" in prayer compels the door of blessing open. In other words, he continues to come even at inopportune times to obtain his request.

**NOTE:** God's delays are not necessarily His denials of your requests. He is patient and therefore you must be. God's timetable is not your timetable,

therefore do not try to force Him to follow yours. The Lord does everything in perfect timing. Learn to wait on Him with humble supplications.

- ❑ **Matt 15:21-28** - Jesus praises this woman saying that she has “great faith” because she kept asking her request even though she was seriously rejected four times by Jesus.
- ❑ **2 Cor 12:7-12** - Paul prayed three times for affliction to be taken away. The Lord finally answered him by revealing that His grace was sufficient for him. He states, “...my strength is made perfect in weakness.”
- ❑ **Matt 26:39-44** - Jesus prayed three times “...let this cup pass from me”. Jesus was persistent in His requests. Read **Heb 5:7**.
- ❑ **1 Kin 18:41-44** - Elijah prayed seven times to start the rain again after a three and one half year drought. He prayed earnestly till he saw God move.
- ❑ **Exo 17:8-16** - Moses prayed all day with his hands lifted until the battle was won.
- ❑ **Gen 18:22-33** - Abraham prayed for Sodom until he arrived at a mutually acceptable solution with God.
- ❑ **Gen 32:24-32** - Jacob wrestled all night with God until he received a blessing. (Maybe some would not consider this prayer.)

## **IX. YOU ARE A PRIEST THAT CAN INTERCEDE**

- ❑ **1 Pet 2:2-10** - As a newborn babe you have entered into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices through prayer.

**DEFN:** “Priest” - one who offers sacrifices unto God as a form of worship.

**NOTE:** You are a priest unto God even as a newborn babe. Since Jesus offered Himself on the cross, there are no more blood sacrifices for sin to be offered. The offerings we make now are offerings made without hands, spiritual sacrifices of praise, thanksgiving, and supplication for others through prayer. (**Psa 116:17; Heb 13:15-16**).

- ❑ **Rev 1:6** - Christ has made us kings and priests through His blood.
- ❑ **Eph 2:12-19** - We have access as priests to God through faith in His blood.
- ❑ **Heb 4:14-16** (Intentionally repeated) - Jesus is our high priest and we as believer priests can come boldly to His throne of grace because of the offering of His body once for all.

**NOTE:** In **2 Kin 19:1-7** Eliakim, the high priest, was the true deliverer for Israel to bring them victory. Many think that it was Hezekiah’s prayer that delivered Israel. But God stated in **Isa 22:20-25** that Eliakim was the champion in delivering the house of David through prayer. See, the



priest, as does the king, has power with God to win battles!

## X. LEARN TO PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

- **Col 4:2-3** - Paul asked the brethren to pray for an open door of utterance.
- **Col 4:12-13** - Epaphras “labored” fervently in prayers for others that they may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. Prayer can be laborious!
- **Col 1:9-12** - Paul prayed that the Colossians “... might be filled with the knowledge of his (God’s) will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” He prayed that they may be fruitful in every good work and strengthened with all might.
- **Eph 1:15-17** - Paul prayed for the Ephesians that they might gain “the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:”
- **Eph 6:18-20** (Intentionally repeated) - Pray with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. Pray that they may speak boldly for Christ.
- **Matt 26:41** - Pray that you, including your brethren, enter not into temptation.
- **Luke 22:31-32** - Jesus prayed for Peter that his “...faith fail not”.
- **Jam 5:13-16** – Pray one for another that you may be healed, spiritually and physically.
- **1 Tim 2:1-8** - Pray for the government leaders “...lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.”
- **John 17:9-23** - Jesus prayed that we may all become one in truth.
- **John 17:20-21** - Pray for the souls of the lost to be saved.
- **Job 42:10** – “The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends.”

## XI. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

- **Isa 59:1-2** - Known sin in your life will hinder your prayers.

**NOTE:** You are to be always praying in the Spirit (**Eph 6:18**). Sin hinders your spirit and defiles your conscience. Then your heart condemns you and you have no confidence with God (**1 John 3:18-21**). As a result you lose your sincerity and fervency in prayer and are not heard on high.

- **Psa 66:18** - Regarding iniquity in your heart will block your prayers.

**NOTE:** Any defilement of the heart will quench your spirit to communicate with God. Look at **Matt 15:17-20** to see what Jesus says will defile a man.

- **Jam 4:1-2** (Intentionally repeated) - You are not asking fervently because you are too busy trying to produce the answer.
- **Jam 4:3-5** – “... ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” In other words, you have a selfish motive behind your prayer to fulfill your lusts with the request. The Lord will not answer you because He knows it would hinder your growth.

**NOTE:** For this reason many people do not really get saved when they ask because they are not asking with a sincere heart. They have ulterior motives in mind.

- **Jam 4:6-10** - Pride will cause God to resist you in your prayers. You think you know better and you will not submit to God. This is the problem of being self-willed. You will not be able to resist the devil until you submit to God’s will, acknowledging that He knows what is best

**NOTE:** Saul was not obedient to the Lord’s command because he was self-willed. He thought he had a better way, but when he went to worship, he was rejected (**1 Sam 15:22-23**). This was the sad trend of his life. He tried to pray and get hold of God but God would not respond to him! Therefore he turned to a witch for direction and was soon destroyed. (**1 Sam 28:7-8**).

- **Rom 1:21** - A lack of thankfulness can lead you in a path of darkness that will hinder your prayers. Paul says, “...be ye thankful.” (**Col 3:15**).
- **1 John 3:17-23** (Intentionally repeated) - Stinginess with your worldly possessions will hinder your prayers.
- **1 Pet 3:7** - A wrong relationship with your mate will hinder your prayers.
- **Matt 5:23-24; 1 Pet 3:8-12** - Prayer is blocked by wrongs unrighted, debts unpaid, offended brothers not reconciled.
- **Mark 11:24-26; Matt 6:12** - Unforgiveness grieves the Lord and hinders your prayers.

**NOTE:** A grudge, a root of bitterness, malice, or even hatred are all forms of unforgiveness. **Eph 4:32** - We are to forgive as Christ forgave us. **Matt 18:21-35** - This portion reveals the sad end of unforgiveness.

## **XII. THE IMPORTANCE OF GROUP PRAYER**

- **Matt 18:19-20** - Gather together with others to pray. If two agree, there is more power in petitioning.

**NOTE:** Get involved and gather with others in prayer. Join with your brethren in group prayer such as Wednesday night prayer meetings, men’s prayer

- meetings, Saturday prayer breakfasts, and all night prayer meetings
- **Acts 2:1-4** - The first church gathered in one accord to pray for ten days. The Lord moved in great power to save multitudes.
- **Acts 2:42-47** - The first church gathered for prayer often and saw the Lord add to the church daily.
- **Acts 4:23-31** - The first church prayed again in one accord. The prayer is recorded. Afterwards they were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God with boldness.

### **XIII. PRACTICAL TIPS IN PRAYER**

- Pray more in private than in public. The person who doesn't speak with the Lord in secret should lay a hand to his mouth and not try to show others how to pray in public. That kind of foolish heart will be praying only to be heard of men.
- When you pray in private, pray aloud or at least move your lips (**1 Sam 1:13**). There is a tendency to let your mind wander or drift off to sleep if you pray non-verbally.
- When asked to publicly lead in prayer, don't pray long prayers. Consider the circumstances and pray accordingly. Lengthy prayers should be saved for your closet.
- When possible, try to gather in group prayer meetings. Attend all night prayer meetings when they are called. Jesus prayed all night (**Luke 6:12**) and Paul was in watchings (late night prayer times) often (**2 Cor 11:27**). The disciples could not watch with Jesus for one hour in prayer on the night of His arrest. This was an opportunity that they most likely regretted. (**Matt 26:40**).
- Fasting can accompany seasons of prayer. Jesus recommended it to His disciples for difficult prayer requests (**Matt 17:20-21; Mark 9:29; Matt 6:16-18**). Throughout the ages, men have brought their bodies under subjection and found the power of God through fasting and prayer.
- Be definite in your praying, ask specifically for things. This demonstrates your faith! Do not be too general or vague in your petitions or you will never see the request answered. Speak out individual names, places, times, monies, needs, etc. Then you will rejoice at the Lord's specific answers.
- Do not dictate to the Lord how He should answer your prayers. The Lord delights in being creative. He can be so unique in bringing the answer to pass. Read **Eph3:20**
- Pray about a matter until the peace comes, then praise Him for the answer. This might not occur in just one session of prayer, but when the Spirit of God gives you a peace indicating that your Father has heard. Respond in praise and thanksgiving. **2 Chr 20:21-22** again, they praised the Lord before they saw the answer.

- ❑ Determine to pray on your knees when possible. This is a humble position before your Lord, Elijah prayed with his face between his knees (**1 Kin 18:42**).
- ❑ Do not allow yourself to be interrupted by little trifles while you are talking with the KING OF KINGS. If you have children, teach them to respect the time of prayer you have set aside, and not disturb you while you are praying.
- ❑ Learn to share all your feelings before the Lord. Pour out your complaints, frustrations, fears, questions, reservations, and bewilderment before Him in love and respect. Reading the Psalms will show you that David often did this. He was honest and emptied his heart before his Friend (**Psa 62:8 & Psa 77**).
- ❑ During fellowships with other believers, ask them to tell you of answered prayer in their lives. This will encourage you to continue to pray about certain matters.
- ❑ Keep a record of answered prayers in the back of your Bible. Note the date you started praying and when the answer came. This will be very encouraging to you and will increase your faith. Also, it will establish a memorial for your children to appreciate. It proves that the Lord is the same yesterday, today, and forever (**Heb 13:8**).

## **CONCLUSION:**

You should now be ready to take up the responsibility and privilege of prayer. Commune with Him often. Grow in your fellowship with Him day by day. Then pray with the understanding that our Father is the "ALMIGHTY GOD", whose resources are unlimited. Realize that your Father is not only able to perform your greatest request, but when He has done so there is an infinite amount of untapped power remaining. As your faith increases, ask for many things. The Lord delights in BIG prayers. "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."  
(**Jer 33:3**)