

Prayer and the Believer

1. Why is it important for a Christian to learn about Prayer?

- Because this is how we communicate with God. It is a vitally important element of Christian maturity and effectiveness.
- Prayer is one of the 3 basic disciplines of Christian Living

Bible Meditation, Prayer, Fellowship

The Nature of Prayer –

1. The **primary purpose of prayer** is for us to align our human earthly will with His heavenly divine will. To conform our imperfect hearts and minds to His. It is to further submit ourselves to His good providence and entrust ourselves to Him. It is to express our thankfulness and dependence upon Him, for our good and His Glory. Heb 5:7, James 5:16, Phil 4:6-7,
2. **Humility in approaching God** – The act of prayer itself acknowledges a sure dependence on God. We BOW our heads and hearts before His throne. We seek to trust in and rely upon Him in prayer. We cannot therefore approach Him in arrogance or with foolish hearts but in humility, carefully presenting our selves before Him. A praying Christian must see himself in right relationship to God. **Ecclesiastes 5:1-2 - 5:1** **Guard your steps** when you go to the house of God. **Go near to listen** rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. 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. NIV
 - A. Guard your steps
 - B. Go near to listen
 - C. Do not be hasty
 - D. God is in heaven

The Practice of Prayer -

1. **Devoted to prayer** – The Christian should always be devoted to prayer. We are to pray at all times, unceasing, on every occasion, continuing always in prayer, for everyone and everything. Prayer is very much like breathing. We are to constantly and continually pray unto God. This is our lifeline, our umbilical cord for the life of God. It is to be a constant discipline and habit. **Eph 6:18-19, 2 Cor 12:8, Acts 12:5, 1 Thes 3:10**

Colossians 4:2- 2 **Devote yourselves to prayer**, being watchful and thankful. NIV

2. Prayer should -

- A. Acknowledge God's greatness
- B. Acknowledge our dependence on God
- C. Be seasoned with thanksgiving
- D. Be according to God's Word
- E. Be submissively but confidently trusting God for His will to be done
- F. Be fervent

3. Prayer should not -

- A. Be arrogant or prideful
- B. Demanding
- C. Violate God's Word or principles therein

The Struggle of Prayer -

1. Prayer is a struggle – Prayer can be a very difficult thing to “labor” in. It is difficult to remain alert in prayer for the things at hand. This is labor, to fervently plead with God concerning a matter, and persevering with God for a breakthrough. Few Christians know the kind of fervent prayer modeled by saints such as Daniel and Jesus and Paul. May God grant us to grasp the vital importance of growing in this area of our Christian life! Col 4:12,

Daniel 9:18-19 - 18 Give ear, O God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. **19 O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay,** because your city and your people bear your Name." NIV

2. Sometimes the answer is no – Prayer is always and absolutely governed by God’s providence. He will answer how He sees fit, that is His prerogative, He is God! One thing is for sure, He will always do what is good, He cannot do anything less! Prayer should always be qualified with the humble submission of, “if it is thy will.”

3. The answer could be “YES” more often – Many times our prayers are hindered because of specific obstructions to positive answers. These could include:

- **the presence of unrepentant sin in one’s life**
- **impure motives**
- **ignorance in the things requested (against the will of God) – Rom 12:2**

1 John 3:21-23 - 21 Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God 22 and **receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.** NIV

1 John 5:14-15 - 14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that **if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.** 15 And if we know that he hears us-whatever we ask-we know that we have what we asked of him. NIV

James 4:3 - 3 When you ask, **you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives,** that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. NIV

Application -

1. Teach your disciple that the best prayers come right out of scripture.
Col 1:9-12, Phil 1:9-11, Eph 1:16-19,3:16-19, Philemon 6, 2 Thes 1:11
2. You can never go wrong with prayer. When in doubt, PRAY! God is gracious and merciful, giving and loving!
3. It is no burden to God to grant your request. He has inexhaustible resources! Your not putting God out by you simple requests, you are glorifying Him by acknowledging your dependence on Him!

Q & A – Anyone?

Recommended Reading:

John MacArthur – Alone With God

John Bunyan – Prayer

Thomas Watson – The Lord’s Prayer

*This is an outline only and made to compliment the Fundamentals of the Faith manual.