

Understanding Prayer

Introduction

Almost every person that I have known has at one time talked about praying or practices prayer. Families pray before eating. Soldiers pray for protection. Those in trouble seek help through prayer. **There is nothing more important to the Christian than a prayer life.** This lesson is designed to help you understand prayer and begin a prayer life.

Our lesson on prayer will answer the following questions:

- I. What is prayer?
- II. How should we pray?
- III. When should we pray?
- IV. For what should we pray?
- V. Why should we pray?

I. What is prayer?

1. Luke 11:2

“And he said unto them, When ye pray, _ _ _ , Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.”

Very simply put, prayer is communication with God. Notice that in the model prayer God says that “when ye pray, say,…” The key word that I want you to notice is the word, “say.”

Prayer is communication with God.

2. Matthew 7:7-11

In verse 7 we find that to those who _ _ _ it shall be given.

In verse 8 we find that everyone who _____ receiveth.

In verse 11 we see that our Heavenly Father gives good things to those who ___ Him.

1 John 5:14, 15

We can be confident that if we ___ according to God's will, He will hear us. If we know that He hears us, then we know that we have the _____ that we desire of Him.

Prayer is a child of God bringing his petitions and requests to his Heavenly Father.

In Conclusion: Prayer is communication with God, and prayer is God's children making their requests to Him.

II. How should we pray?

1. Psalm 100:4

In this verse we are told to enter into God's gates or courts (His presence) with t_____ and with p_____.

Philippians 4:6

In this verse we are admonished to make our requests known to God by prayer and supplication with _____.

When we communicate with God, we ought to spend time thanking Him and praising Him for Who He is and what He has done.

2. I John 1:9

Jesus wants us to _____ our _____ to Him.

He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Amen!

Proverbs 28:13

God will have mercy on the person who _____
and forsakes his sins.

When we communicate with God, we ought to spend time confessing our sins to Him.

NOTE: When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He told them to say, “Our Father.” Also, in His teaching on prayer, He used illustrations of a son asking his father for food (Matthew 7:7-11). In this father/son relationship we can learn two great truths about prayer.

- 1) A son who is in good standing with his father is much more likely to have his father meet his needs when he makes a request. Likewise, when we are in good standing with God, we are much more likely to have our needs met when we make our requests to Him. The truth here is that **it is important for us to confess our sins to God**, so that we can maintain a good relationship with Him.
- 2) A son who asks, and asks, and asks, and asks to get things from his father, and never shows his appreciation for what he has received, is an ungrateful child. The father of an ungrateful child has little desire to continue to give his child what he asks for. Likewise, we are ungrateful children when we ask, and ask, and ask, and ask God to give us things, but never show our appreciation to Him for what He has done for us. The truth here is that **we should include praise and thanksgiving to God in our communication with God.**

3. **Matthew 6:5, 6**

Why do the hypocrites love to pray? (Verse 5)

How does Jesus want us to pray? (Verse 6)

Matthew 14:22, 23

Where did Jesus go to pray? _____

When evening came He was there _____.

Mark 1:35

In this verse Jesus departed into a _____ place to pray. (This word means that no one else was present.)

We should spend much time in prayer alone and in secret.

4. **Acts 1:13-15**

Those who were gathered together in the upper room continued in _____ and _____.

Acts 4:31

The disciples were assembled _____, and when they _____, the place was shaken.

Acts 12:12

In this passage, Peter (who had just been delivered out of prison by an angel) came to the house of Mary where _____ were gathered together _____.

Christians should also pray together.

5. **Luke 22:41-44**

In this passage Jesus is praying right before he is taken to be crucified. In verse 44 it says that He was in an agony and prayed more _____.

Colossians 4:12

Paul says of Epaphras that he always labored f_____ in p_____ for the saints in Colosse.

James 5:16, 17

In verse 16 we find that the _____
_____ availeth much.

In verse 17 Elias prayed _____ that it might not rain, and it didn't rain for three and a half years.

We should pray earnestly. Earnestly means seriously or intensely. Earnestly implies hard work, fervency, and passion.

In Conclusion: As we communicate with God in prayer, we ought to take time to confess our sins to Him, and we ought to praise God for Who He is and what He has done.

A Christian should have a private prayer life where he spends much time talking with God alone. In addition, there is a time for public prayer when God's people should come together to beseech God for common interests. Furthermore, the Christian should approach prayer with zeal and passion.

III. When should we pray?

1. Acts 3:1

Peter and _____ went to the temple at the _____ of prayer. Peter and John had a specific time that they prayed.

Daniel 6:10

Daniel prayed three times a __ __ __. He had specific times that he prayed.

We should have a specific, daily time when we pray.

2. I Thessalonians 5:17

In this verse we are admonished to __ __ __ without ceasing (stopping). Prayer should not be something we did, but rather something that we are constantly doing. We should be of the mind to pray at any time.

We should have an attitude of prayer.

3. Luke 6:12, 13

Jesus prayed all night before He chose His twelve
_____.

We should pray when getting ready to make important decisions or accomplish important tasks.

In Conclusion: We should have a time set aside for prayer each day. We should also have an attitude of prayer, or a mind to pray at any time. We should pray before making important decisions and before accomplishing important tasks.

IV. For what should we pray?

1. Matthew 26:41

Jesus told His disciples to watch and __ __ __ so that they wouldn't enter into _____.

We should pray for help against temptation.

2. Act 4:29

The disciples asked God for _____ to speak God's Word.

We should pray for boldness.

3. Genesis 24:12

Abraham had sent his servant to get a wife for his son, Isaac. The servant _____ for God's help so that he could fulfill his work.

We should pray for help in the work that God has given us to do.

4. Colossians 1:9-11

Paul and Timothy prayed for the saints at Colosse. What was their prayer and desire for them? _____

Romans 10:1

What was Paul's heart's desire and prayer in this verse?

The two preceding passages are good examples of how we should pray for others. Paul prayed that others would:

- i. Have knowledge of God and His will.
- ii. Be fruitful.
- iii. Be strengthened.
- iv. Be saved.

We should pray for others.

5. I Timothy 2:1-3

These verses teach us to pray for those who are in a _____ over us. It doesn't matter whether they are good or bad leaders.

We should pray for those in authority.

6. Matthew 9: 37, 38

In these verses Jesus told His disciples to _____ that the _____ of the harvest would send forth _____ into His harvest.

We should pray for laborers.

7. Acts 12:4-5

Peter was put in prison. He was guarded by 16 (four quaternions) s_____. The disciples were powerless to help Peter, so they prayed to God that He would deliver Peter.

We should pray about what only God can do.

In Conclusion : The preceding verses give us just some examples for what we should pray. Certainly, a Christian could not go wrong by praying for anything that is right and holy.

V. Why should we pray?

1. Romans 1:17

This verse tells us that the just shall live by _____.

II Corinthians 5:7

This verse says that we _____ by faith, not by _____.

Hebrews 11:6

We find in this verse that it is impossible to _____
God without _____.

Matthew 17:14-21

In this passage a man brings his son to Jesus. His son was demon possessed. Jesus' _____ had not been able to cast out the demon. Jesus cast the demon out of the man's son. Jesus' disciples went to Jesus later and asked why they could not cast the demon out. Jesus answered them, "Because of your unbelief." He then went on to say in verse 21, "Howbeit, this kind goeth not out but by _____ and _____."

The teaching from these verses is that **faith and prayer** are connected. The disciples had a lack of faith, and Jesus told them that the kind of faith needed for that work would only come by **prayer** and fasting. People of great faith are people of great prayer. Likewise, people who have a weak prayer life possess small or weak faith.

We should pray because prayer strengthens our faith. We pray to a God we cannot see - that takes faith. When God answers our prayers, our faith grows stronger. God wants us to live by faith and to walk by faith. Without faith we cannot please Him. **This is why prayer is so important! A life of faith can only be sustained in a life of prayer.**

2. Psalm 73:25-28

The Psalmist states that it is _____ to draw _____ to God.

James 4:8

If you draw nigh to God, He will

Hebrews 10:19-22

In verse 19 we find that as believers we can have _____- _____ to enter into the _____ by the blood of Jesus.

Verse 22 tells us to _____ with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

We should pray because prayer draws us closer to God. God created man to fellowship with Him and bring Him glory. When we do not pray, we are telling God that it is not important to us to fellowship with Him. **It is of extreme importance for each child of God to develop a prayer life!**

In Conclusion:

We should pray because prayer strengthens our faith, without which we cannot please God. We should pray because prayer draws us closer to God.

There is much more that can be said about this subject of prayer, but the verses you have studied should help you to better understand prayer as you seek to establish a prayer life.

Review - Understanding Prayer

I. What is prayer?

- A. Prayer is _____ with God.
- B. Prayer is a child of God making his r_____ to his Heavenly Father.

II. How should we pray?

- A. When we pray, we should take time to _____ our sins to God, and we should take time to p_____ God for Who He is and what He has done.
- B. A Christian should have a _____ prayer life where he spends much time talking with God alone.
- C. Christians should pray e _____, or with fervency and passion.

III. When should we pray?

- A. We should set aside time for prayer each _____.
- B. We should have an _____ of prayer, or a mind to pray at any time.

IV. For what should we pray?

- A. We should pray for help against _____.
- B. We should pray for help in the _____ that God has given us to do.
- C. We should pray for _____ for the harvest field.

V. Why should we pray?

- A. We should pray because prayer strengthens our _____, without which we cannot _____ God.

B. We should pray because _____ draws us
_____ to God.

Assignment: Choose at least 2 of the following verses, memorize them, and say them to your teacher.

- Matthew 7:11
- Philippians 4:6
- James 4:8
- I John 1:9

Application: What will you do based on the truth you learned in this lesson?

Your name: _____

Name of teacher: _____

Signature of teacher: _____

Date completed: _____