

## BIBLE STUDY #5

### Prayer

---

---

Two primary components of a quiet time include Bible study and prayer. This week's lesson will focus on prayer and its importance to your Christian life.

It has been said that the greatest sin of the church is lack of prayer. If this is true, it is probably because the average Christian spends very little time in prayer.

"If a man is man and God is God, to live without prayer is not merely an awful thing, it is an infinitely foolish thing." – Phillips Brooks

Simply defined, prayer is conversation with God. It involves both talking and listening.

### WHY PRAY?

Many believe prayer is only necessary when life has gone very wrong. In this case, God becomes our "911" call when we are in trouble. While God is certainly concerned about all our emergencies in life, He desires a relationship beyond crises management.

Again, consider your relationship with any person close to you. For that relationship to grow and flourish, you must spend time communicating with each other. God desires this kind of relationship with us. He wants us to share dreams, hopes, heartaches, victories, concerns, and anything else dear to us. In turn, He wants to share His will with us. He wants us to know, and do, what He desires as our heavenly Father. All this is accomplished through prayer.

On a scale of 1-10 (10 being best), how well do you think you do when it comes to the subject of prayer? Explain.

Read **Colossians 4:2**. What command is given in this verse?

Read **Mark 14:38**. Why did Jesus tell His disciples to pray?

## KNOWING GOD HEARS US

Read **Psalm 66:17-20**. In verse 17 the writer prays. What does the writer say in verse 18 about God not hearing his prayer?

It is important to realize, once again, that prayer is about your relationship with Christ. When things are not right between you and the Lord, because of sin in your life, it will be much more difficult to develop your relationship.

What do verses 19 and 20 confirm for us?

You may need to start your prayer time with confession related to any sin in your life. Once sincerely accomplished, you can be certain God is hearing you when you pray. More will be said about this later in this lesson.

Read **1 Peter 3:12**. What promise is made here regarding the prayer of the righteous?

## HOW TO PRAY

There are many examples in Scripture of how to pray. Remember though, how you pray is not as important as communication with God.

Read **Ephesians 6:18**. This verse tells us to pray "in the Spirit." This means to pray under the inspiration of God's Spirit coming to us through His Word. When are we told to do this?

How are we told to do this?

With that in mind, let us now review some different ways to pray.

### ADORATION/PRAISE

This is honoring God for *who He is* more than for things He has done. This is celebrating God for being God.

Read **Revelation 19:5**. What command is given in this verse?

Read **Hebrews 13:15**. How is praise expressed in this verse?

Some of the more practical ways to praise God come in the form of music. Although certainly not required, praise is often linked to music. Do you have a favorite hymn or chorus that could be used to praise God? Explain.

Praise can also be expressed by praying the Scriptures. You can take Scriptures (especially the Psalms) and read them as a prayer. This can be a very meaningful type of prayer and praise.

### THANKSGIVING

This is expressing gratefulness to God for *what He has done*. This is thanking God for all the blessings on your life and answers to prayers.

Read **Ephesians 5:20**. What are we told to be thankful for in this verse?

How is it possible to give thanks in everything? (Hint: Read **Romans 8:28** for assistance)

### CONFESSION

This is admitting your sins to God and agreeing to make a real effort to turn from these sins.

Read **1 John 1:9**. What does this verse say about confession?

What promise is contained in this verse once we have sincerely confessed?

Is confession something you need to do now? Explain.

## PETITION

This is asking God for specific requests on behalf of yourself and others.

Read **Philippians 4:6-7**. How are we told to present our requests before God?

"We ask what we think to be best; God gives what He knows to be best." – William Burkitt

## WHAT TO PRAY

We can ask whatever we wish of God; however, Scripture coaches us on things to specifically pray for in life. Match the following verses in Matthew with the item about which we are told to pray. These items of prayer all come directly from the words of Jesus Christ.

<b>Matthew 5:44</b>	Our daily needs
<b>Matthew 6:10</b>	Handling temptation
<b>Matthew 6:11</b>	Forgiveness
<b>Matthew 6:12</b>	Our enemies
<b>Matthew 6:13</b>	Sending workers Christ
<b>Matthew 9:37-38</b>	God's will on earth

Scripture contains hundreds of passages telling us what to ask in petition.

If you have been having a regular quiet time to this point, you are probably already aware of things you know you should be praying about in your life.

What are some things you already know God wants you to be praying about in your life?

## HEARING FROM GOD

"Never make the blunder of trying to forecast the way God is going to answer your prayer." – Oswald Chambers

Once we pray, we want a response. This answer could come through God's Word, the moving of His Spirit in your life, or through other people or circumstances. The response may be very different from what we expect. But again, God's response (and your ability to hear Him) will be predicated by your relationship with Him. Read the following passages and tell what they say about "hearing from God."

### 1 John 5:14-15

## James 1:6-8

## Mark 11:25

Prayer is not easy. Becoming the person God wants you to be will not be easy.

Read **John 16:23-24**. This passage says God wants our "joy to be complete." This comes by asking for and receiving God's plan for us. Prayer is the communication vehicle that makes this possible. Make prayer a priority in your life, and God will reward you greatly!

"Of all the blessings of Christian salvation none is greater than this, that we have access to God in prayer." – Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Overall, what do you think/feel God is saying to you through this lesson?

## ASSIGNMENTS

- \_\_\_\_ 1. **Scripture Memory: Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)**, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
- \_\_\_\_ 2. **Bible Study: #5**
- \_\_\_\_ 3. **Quiet Time:** Have at least FIVE quiet times this week.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. **Other:** Try to spend at least 10 minutes in prayer each time you have a quiet time this week.