

Why and How Should We Pray?

Prayer is the slender nerve that moves the mighty arm of God.

1. Spiritual truth of prayer:

- a. God has put the need for a personal relationship with Him in each human heart.
- b. Each human desires deeply to know and experience God.
- c. Nothing is more satisfying than knowing we have been touched by the divine.

2. Biblical outline for prayer:

a. To the Father

"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,'"

Matthew 6:9 (NIV)

For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!"

Romans 8:15 (HCSB)

b. Through the Son

For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Ephesians 2:18 (HCSB)

"In that day you will not ask Me anything. I assure you: Anything you ask the Father in My name, He will give you. Until now you have asked for nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete."

John 16:23-24 (HCSB)

c. In the power of the Holy Spirit

Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert in this with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints.

Ephesians 6:18 (HCSB)

In the same way the Spirit also joins to help in our weakness, because we do not know what to pray for as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with unspoken groanings. And He who searches the hearts knows the Spirit's mind-set, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Romans 8:26-27 (HCSB)

3. Developing a relationship with God:

- a. Communion with God. Draw near to God.
- b. Commitment to God. Declare our dependence on God. God is the source.
- c. Communication with God. Share our needs and desires with God.

4. Jesus' model for prayer:

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, He got up, went out, and made His way to a deserted place. And He was praying there. Mark 1:35 (HCSB)

During those days He went out to the mountain to pray and spent all night in prayer to God. Luke 6:12 (HCSB)

While He was praying in private and His disciples were with Him, He asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" Luke 9:18 (HCSB)

About eight days after these words, He took along Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. Luke 9:28 (HCSB)

5. Rewards of prayer:

But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Matthew 6:6 (HCSB)

a. Joy

Until now you have asked for nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete." John 16:24 (HCSB)

b. Peace

Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7 (HCSB)

c. Anticipation

Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you. Matthew 7:7 (HCSB)

6. Barriers to answered prayer:

a. Unconfessed sin

Indeed, the LORD's hand is not too short to save, and His ear is not too deaf to hear. But your iniquities have built barriers between you and your God, and your sins have made Him hide His face from you so that He does not listen.
Isaiah 59:1-2 (HCSB)

b. Unforgiveness

For if you forgive people their wrongdoing, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. But if you don't forgive people, your Father will not forgive your wrongdoing.
Matthew 6:14-15 (HCSB)

c. Disobedience

Dear friends, if our conscience doesn't condemn us, we have confidence before God and can receive whatever we ask from Him because we keep His commands and do what is pleasing in His sight.
1 John 3:21-22 (HCSB)

d. Wrong motives

You ask and don't receive because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your evil desires.
James 4:3 (HCSB)

e. Misunderstanding of the will of God.

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.
Matthew 6:33 (HCSB)

7. Answered Prayer. God always gives good gifts:

Don't be deceived, my dearly loved brothers. Every generous act and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights; with Him there is no variation or shadow cast by turning.
James 1:16-17 (HCSB)

a. Yes

b. No

c. Wait

d. Grow

8. A model for prayer:

- a. Adoration, praise to God.
- b. Confession of sin.
- c. Thanksgiving for God's provision.
- d. Supplication, the list of needs and requests.

9. The Lord's Prayer:

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be Your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.*
Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV)

- a. *"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name,"*
 - Praise be to God.
- b. *"Your kingdom come,"*
 - May Your rule spread in my life and the world.
- c. *"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*
 - Lord, I submit to Your will. I take up my cross and follow You.
- d. *"Give us today our daily bread."*
 - List of needs
- e. *"Forgive us our debts,"*
 - Confession
- f. *"as we also have forgiven our debtors."*

- Healing of human relationships.
- g.** “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”
- Protection

10. When should we pray?

a. Always

Pray constantly.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (HCSB)

b. Alone

But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Matthew 6:6 (HCSB)

c. With others

Again, I assure you: If two of you on earth agree about any matter that you pray for, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven.

Matthew 18:19 (HCSB)

11. Principle of prayer and fellowship:

If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this: that you produce much fruit and prove to be My disciples. John 15:7-8 (HCSB)

- a.** As we abide in Jesus.
- b.** As His Word abides in us.
- c.** The things we ask for match the very things God wants to do in and for us.
- d.** God brings glory to Himself by answering our prayers.

Notes

