

PETE BUMGARNER MINISTRIES

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PRAYER

STUDY GUIDE



PRAYER

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 11:1

And it came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

Ephesians 6:18

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

THEME

We are urged to pray always, using all types of prayer. However, before we can pray effectively, we must know how to pray correctly. Unfortunately, prayer is taken too lightly by many Christians. Also, many prayers are ineffective because the proper procedure for the various types of prayer is ignored.

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. We must learn the difference between correct and incorrect praying; otherwise, we will remain ineffective in our prayer life.
 - 1. Prayer is one of the most important aspects of the believer's life, yet it is one of the most ignored areas of the average Christian's life.
 - 2. Not all prayer is the same; therefore, we must recognize the type of prayer needed for each situation and pray accordingly.
 - 3. We must also pray to the right person.
 - 4. We certainly must pray according to the Word of God.
- B. The Word of God is the foundation for prayer.
 - 1. We should always go to God with His Word.
 - 2. We should always pray what the Word says.

- C. Remember to pray the answer and not the problem.
- D. What we say must be in line with what we pray.
- E. Prayer procedure is very important.
 - 1. First, we must know what we want.
 - 2. We must also know what the Word says about our desire; otherwise, we will not know God's will when we pray.
 - 3. In order to receive, we must believe when we ask. (Mark 11:24)
 - 4. We must keep our conversation positive. We must not speak contrary to our prayers.
 - 5. We must fight the good fight of faith and bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. (II Corinthians 10:4-5)
 - 6. It is very important to meditate on the Scriptures we use when praying.
 - 7. It is good to take inventory of the prayers already answered. This practice encourages us to pray more, and it also stimulates faith.
 - 8. We must be careful not to "unpray" the prayer we have already prayed; consequently, we should thank and praise God instead of making our petitions repetitious.
 - 9. Believing is the key to seeing; therefore, we must believe when we pray.
- F. If we are not communicating with God daily, we cannot walk victoriously. We should pray in the spirit and read the Word daily, thus establishing good communication with the Father.
- G. Praying involves more than merely making petition; God wants us to fellowship with Him. Prayer is communication with God.
- H. Even though we pray to God, the devil hears what we pray.
 - 1. If we pray legally, we loose angels to work in our behalf.

2. If we pray illegally, we loose the adversary to work against us.
 3. Satan tries to make us doubt the prayers that we pray. He wants to nullify our prayers by causing us to lose faith and to think our prayers have not been heard.
 4. Satan understands the tongues of both men and angels; therefore, we must pray correctly, according to the will of God. Satan cannot thwart that kind of prayer; however, he can tempt us to stagger and walk in doubt and unbelief.
- I. We are not attempting to teach or advocate a formula for prayer. We must never reduce prayer to a formula! But, it is vital that we understand the importance of prayer, as well as the principles of prayer.

II. WHO SHOULD PRAY

- A. All Christians should pray. (I Timothy 2:8)
- B. The afflicted should pray. (Psalm 34:19; James 5:13)
- C. The elders should pray. (James 5:14)
- D. Every believer should pray every day.

III. WHEN SHOULD WE PRAY

- A. We should pray always, realizing that communication with the Father is vital. (Luke 18:1)
 1. We should pray when things are going well.
 2. We should also pray when things seem to be going wrong.
 3. Circumstances must not affect our consistency in prayer.
- B. When afflicted, we should pray instead of complaining. (James 5:13)
- C. We should pray whenever we are called upon to pray.
- D. We should not pray until our prayer is in line with God's will.

1. God's Word is His will; therefore, we must pray according to the Word of God. (Proverbs 28:9)
2. I John 5:14-16 is an excellent guideline for prayer.

IV. REASONS TO PRAY

- A. We should pray for forgiveness. (II Chronicles 7:14; I John 1:9)
- B. We should pray to avoid yielding to temptation. (Matthew 26:41)
- C. We should sanctify our food with prayer. (I Timothy 4:4-5)
- D. Prayer is a means of making request to God. (Matthew 21:22; Philippians 4:6; I Peter 5:7)
- E. Prayer increases our sensitivity to God. (Matthew 17:21)
- F. The prayer of the righteous delights the Lord. (Proverbs 15:8)
- G. Prayer can be compared to the offering of incense; the fragrance is pleasant to the Lord. (Leviticus 16:12-13; Psalm 141:2; Revelation 5:8)
- H. We should pray for the peace of Jerusalem. (Psalm 122:6)
- I. Prayer should be a way of life for the believer; it is communication with God.
- J. We should pray to get the will of God accomplished in earth.

V. HOW SHOULD WE PRAY

- A. A fundamental guideline for praying is found in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-4.
 1. Awareness of Who we are praying to, "our Father Who is located in heaven," is vital.
 2. Praise follows the recognition of "our Father Who is in heaven."
 3. Then, we must focus our attention upon the kingdom of God and the will of God.
 4. We must then see God as our provider.

5. We are reminded that our forgiveness is contingent upon our forgiving others.
 6. We are then reminded of our weaknesses and God's power to deliver us from temptations and evil influence.
 7. Prayer is concluded with an exaltation of God.
- B. We should enter into a private place where we can pray without being interrupted. (Matthew 6:6-15).
1. The majority of our prayer life should be private prayer.
 2. We must realize that prayer is communication, not ritual; therefore, our praying should come from the heart rather than memory.
 3. We must learn to pray privately so that we may be rewarded openly, and better equipped to pray publicly. (Matthew 6:6)
 4. We should keep in mind that prayer is spiritual.
- C. We should not use vain repetitions when we pray. (Matthew 6:7)
1. Excellent words and repetitions do not impress God.
 2. Faith not only impresses God, but it also causes God to move in our behalf.
- D. We should always pray according to God's will.
1. God's Word is His will.
 2. We must have knowledge of the Word of God in order to pray correctly.
- E. The prayer of petition must be prayed to the Father in the name of Jesus. (Matthew 6:6; Luke 11:2; John 16:23-27; II Corinthians 13:7)
- F. We are to pray with the spirit as we rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us. (John 16:13; Romans 8:26; I Corinthians 14:14-15; Jude:20)
- G. We are to pray with understanding. (I Corinthians 14:15)

- H. We are to pray without ceasing. (I Thessalonians 3:10 and 5:17)
- I. We must believe when we pray, not when the manifestation comes. (Mark 11:24)
- J. We should pray to communicate with God, not to impress men. (Matthew 6:5-6)
- K. We must be persistent in our prayer life. We must remember to pray the answer, not the problem. Also, it is important not to “unpray” what we have already prayed. (Luke 18:1)
- L. The position of one’s body while praying is a matter of personal choice.
 - 1. It is scriptural to pray while lying prostrate on the floor. (Numbers 16:22; Matthew 26:39)
 - 2. It is scriptural to pray while standing. (I Kings 8:22; Mark 11:25)
 - 3. It is scriptural to pray while kneeling. (II Chronicles 6:13; Psalm 95:6; Luke 22:41)
 - 4. It is scriptural to lift up your hands while praying. (Psalm 28:2; Lamentations 2:19; I Timothy 2:8)
 - 5. God is interested in the condition of the heart, not the position of the body.

VI. FOR WHOM SHOULD WE PRAY

- A. We should pray for those who spitefully use us. (Luke 6:28; Luke 23:34)
 - 1. Jesus prayed for those who hated and spitefully used Him. (Luke 23:34)
 - 2. Stephen imitated Jesus by interceding for His executioners. (Acts 7:60)
 - 3. We must demonstrate unto others the mercy that God has demonstrated unto us.
- B. We are to pray for the sick. (James 5:14-15)

1. We must pray the prayer of faith and expect results.
 2. When praying for the sick, we are told to pray "the prayer of faith," not "if it be Thy will."
- C. We should pray for one another. (James 5:16)
1. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.
 2. I John 5:16 tells us to pray for a brother who has sinned, and God will give him life.
- D. We must pray for all the saints. (Ephesians 6:18)
- E. We must also pray for all men. (I Timothy 2:1)
- F. We are to pray for kings and for those in authority. (I Timothy 2:2)
- G. We must listen to the Spirit and pray according to the Spirit's leading.

VII. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

- A. Unforgiveness will hinder one's prayer life. If we do not forgive, we will not be forgiven. (Matthew 5:23-24; Mark 11:25-26)
- B. Husbands that do not give honor (respect) to their wives will find their prayer life hindered. (I Peter 3:7; Ephesians 5:25 & 29)
- C. Unconfessed sin will hinder one's prayer life. (I John 3:20-22)
- D. Asking amiss is also a hindrance to prayer. (James 4:3)
1. Asking amiss means asking for the wrong reasons.
 2. Seeking material things for self-indulgence is asking amiss.
 3. Not asking according to the Word of God may also be asking amiss.
- E. Fainting, or giving up, is another hindrance to prayer. (Luke 18:1-8; Galatians 6:6-9)

- F. Operating in doubt instead of faith will certainly hinder one's prayer. (Matthew 21:22; Mark 11:24)
1. If we pray believing, we will get positive results.
 2. If we pray doubting, we will get negative results; the doubt will negate the prayer.
 3. We must pray in faith if we expect to get positive results.
 4. Doubt believes that God will fail; faith believes that God cannot fail.
- G. Hope substituted for faith is a hindrance to prayer.
1. Hope is the goal we wish to obtain.
 2. Faith is the substance needed to obtain the goal.
- H. Ignorance of God's Word is an obvious hindrance to one's prayer life. (Hosea 4:6)
1. Ignorance of the Word prevents us from praying properly.
 2. We need knowledge of the Word because our faith cannot exceed our knowledge.
 3. Ignorance of the Word will cause us to pray contrary to the Word; such prayers cannot be answered.
- I. Wrong confessions will void our prayers.
1. We may pray the proper prayer and then "unpray" our prayer by the confessions of our mouth. (James 1:6-7)
 2. If we cannot speak in a positive manner, then it is best to keep quiet so that we do not annul our prayers.
- J. Depending upon someone else's faith instead of our own faith is also a hindrance to answered prayer; it is passivity.
- K. Magnifying the problem instead of God will hinder one's prayer life.
- L. Praying the wrong type of prayer is another hindrance to prayer.

- M. Failing to walk according to the Word will also hinder our prayer life. (Leviticus 26: 3 & 14-15; Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 28:9)
- N. Worry is a tremendous hindrance to prayer. (Matthew 6:25-34)
1. Worry is meditating on the negative; it is actually faith in reverse. (Faith sees the need met; worry sees the need unmet.)
 2. If we truly believe that we have what we need, we will not worry. Believing is seeing.
 3. Ask, believe, and receive all at the same time; this procedure prevents worry.
 4. Doubt does not produce anything good.
 5. We must program ourselves with the Word of God in order to be positive.
 6. "The just shall live by faith," not doubt. (Romans 1:17)
 7. Worry has never solved a problem; it actually creates problems.
 8. Worry and fear go hand-in-hand.
 9. Faith is believing that the Word of God will come to pass; worry is believing that the Word of God will not come to pass.
 10. One who worries has not committed his circumstances to God.
 11. God takes care of all our needs. (Isaiah 26:3; Philippians 4:6; I Peter 5:7)
 12. It has been said that "Worry is like a rocking chair; it keeps you busy, but it gets you nowhere."
 13. "We can't change the past, but we can ruin the present by worrying about the future" is another truth that must be realized.

VIII. TYPES OF PRAYER

- A. The prayer of confession or forgiveness is one type of prayer.

1. A sinner's prayer that is sure to be heard is the prayer of repentance. (Luke 18:13; Romans 10:9-10)
 2. The believer has an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous, Who is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (I John 1:9; I John 2:1-2)
- B. The prayer of petition or supplication is another type of prayer. (Mark 11:24; John 14:13-14; Philippians 4:6; I John 3:20-23)
1. The prayer of petition is a prayer that makes a request to God.
 2. The prayer of petition requires knowledge and assurance that God will grant our request.
 3. There are no "if's" in this type prayer.
 4. The prayer of petition must be a prayer of confidence. (I John 5:14-15)
 5. The procedure for the prayer of petition is to pray, believe, and receive, all of which should be done at the same setting.
- C. The prayer of dedication and consecration is a very important prayer.
1. Yielding our will to God is dedicating or consecrating ourselves to Him.
 2. "If" is appropriate in the prayer of dedication and consecration. (Luke 22:42)
 3. Dedication and consecration is giving ourselves totally to God.
- D. Binding and loosing is another type of prayer. (Matthew 18:18)
1. We bind and loose by what we say as well as what we pray.
 2. We do not ask God to bind and loose for us; we bind and loose what He has already declared lawful or unlawful by declaring what His Word says.
 3. The authority to bind and loose is ours.

4. We should speak directly to the hindrance or obstacle when praying this prayer.
 - a. It is not necessary to say “I bind” or “I loose” when praying this type of prayer.
 - b. Binding and loosing is simply allowing or disallowing a situation.

- E. The prayer of agreement is another type of prayer. (Matthew 18:19-20)
 1. The prayer of agreement requires at least two individuals.
 2. These individuals must be in agreement on earth.
 3. Holding hands is not necessarily a sign of agreement.
 4. When praying the prayer of agreement, one should pray and the other must agree with the prayer.

- F. The prayer of praise, worship, and thanksgiving is another important type of prayer.
 1. Praise is what we do when we commend God for Who He is and what He has done.
 2. Worship takes place when the spirit of man communes with the Spirit of God, recognizing the awesomeness, power, and splendor of the one true God.
 3. Thanksgiving is the giving of thanks to God for specific things.
 4. Praise and thanksgiving can be offered through the intellect, but true worship can only be accomplished through the spirit.
 5. The prayer of praise, worship, and thanksgiving has not been sufficiently emphasized.
 6. Nothing is asked for in the prayer of praise.
 7. The prayer of praise and worship strengthens the relationship between God and man.

8. The prayer of praise and worship ministers to God.
 9. The prayer of praise and worship can be compared to the offering of incense.
 10. We should spend time privately worshipping God, remembering that privacy enhances intimacy. (Matthew 6:6)
- G. The prayer of intercession is a very important type of prayer.
1. The prayer of intercession is one person entreating God in behalf of another person. (Luke 11:5-13)
 2. The prayer of intercession is a very needful prayer.
 3. Intercession gives God the authority to operate in behalf of another person.
 4. The prayer of intercession can be prayed in our normal language, but it seems to be most effective when one prays in the spirit.
 5. Intercession gives hope. (Ecclesiastes 4:1-3; Isaiah 59:16; Ezekiel 22:30; Romans 8:26-28; Hebrews 7:25)
 6. The prayer of intercession is the key to any successful ministry.
 7. We should make ourselves available as intercessors.
 8. Intercession may not always be articulated. (Romans 8:26)
 9. Intercession may come from the following four sources:
 - a. People may ask us to pray.
 - b. We can voluntarily pray for others.
 - c. The Spirit of God may direct us to pray.
 - d. Our heart can become so overwhelmed that it cries out to God in a way words cannot express.

IX. STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL PRAYER

- A. We should see what the Word says before we start to pray.

- B. We should apply our faith by acting upon the Word.
- C. We must refuse to accept doubt, fear, and worry.
- D. We must remind ourselves that we cannot be defeated; we are always victorious in Jesus.
- E. Remember that faith comes from the heart, not the head.
- F. We must keep imaginations cast down, and everything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God must be refuted. We must also bring every thought into captivity, making our thought life align to the Word of God.
- G. We must see ourselves successful in prayer, thereby enjoying the covenant benefits given unto us by God.
- H. We must always keep God first and foremost in our praying.
- I. We must constantly study and act upon the Word of God.
- J. We must be mindful to give thanks unto God for the requests that He has already granted unto us.

X. SUMMARY

- A. Prayer changes situations, circumstances, and even people; prayer does not change God.
- B. Prayer is communication with God.
- C. We must not allow anything to hinder our communication with the Father.
- D. We must set aside time to read God's Word and pray.
- E. A consistent prayer life is the key to staying built up; consequently, we can become useful to God and to others.
- F. We must pray in a legal manner, knowing our rights and privileges.

XI. CONCLUSION

- A. When we learn the legality of prayer and abide by God's guidelines, the Judge of the universe will always rule in our favor.
 - 1. Praying can be compared to a courtroom scene.
 - a. The three main characters in a courtroom are: the judge; the prosecuting attorney; and the defense attorney.
 - b. God is the Judge, the devil is the prosecuting attorney, and Jesus is the Defense Attorney.
 - c. Satan is the accuser of the brethren; consequently, he looks for our mistakes so that he can present them to God, the Judge.
 - d. Jesus stands to defend us, but if we have not done things legally, God has no alternative but to rule in favor of the prosecution.
 - 2. God desires to show Himself strong in our behalf, but our hearts must be perfect toward Him. (II Chronicles 16:9)
- B. The sooner we learn that prayer is a privilege instead of a drudgery, the better we will be.
- C. Prayer is a vital part of every successful Christian's life; consequently, we must always pray and not faint.