

Lesson 8: Prayer

INTRODUCTION

Prayer is an essential part of the Christian life and yet considered as the most neglected spiritual resources. An old adage says, “A Christian is as only as strong as his prayer life”. Without prayer, a Christian is bound to spiritual degradation. Spiritual poverty is not only due to deficiency in spiritual intake through God’s Word, but also due to deficiency in the area of our prayer life.

One great Biblical example of a prayerful person was Noah who “walked with God”. To walk with God does not only mean to have a constant communication with God, but also to have Him as your Friend, enjoying the sweetness of His fellowship.

OUTLINE

I. GOD’S PURPOSE IN PRAYER *(excerpt from Pastor ATG’s sermon on Prayer)*

1. **To teach us DEPENDENCE on God**

Prayer is God’s ordained way for Christians to receive good things from the LORD (James 4:2). Even though God perfectly knows our needs, He delights to see us depending upon Him instead of just expecting that He will provide.

2. **To teach us OBEDIENCE to God**

God urgently commands prayer in the Scriptures (Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Timothy 2:1; Ephesians 6:18).

3. **To let us experience the FULLNESS of joy**

Prayer is part of the process that God uses to grant His people the fullness of joy (John 16:24).

4. **To provide us ANSWERS to all our needs**

Prayer is the Christian’s way out of all trouble, and the cure for all worry and anxious care (Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 5:7).

5. **To EMPOWER us for the work of God**

Prayer is the only way to get the power of the Holy Spirit in your life for God’s work (Acts 4:31; 2 Chronicles 7:14).

6. **To provide us VICTORY in our spiritual warfare**

Through prayer, we fight the spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:11-18). Prayer is a spiritual watchdog against temptation (Matthew 26:41; 1 Corinthians 10:13).

II. HOW SHOULD A CHRISTIAN PRAY

1. **Personally**

You must pray like you were speaking with your dear and best Friend (John 15:15-16).

2. **Confidently**

A Christian must approach the throne of God’s grace with full assurance that God will answer his prayer (Hebrews 11:6; 1 John 5:14-15).

3. Persistently

A Christian must be committed to get what he needs (Luke 11:1-13; 18:1-8). The effectual “fervent” prayer of a righteous man avails much in the Lord (James 5:17-18).

4. Gratefully

We must have a proper attitude when we come to God in prayer, an attitude of praise to God for who He is, and for the awesome attributes of His nature. We must manifest gratitude and thankfulness for all God has given us (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

5. Consistently

Praying without ceasing means to have a mind to pray at every opportunity (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

6. Intensely

The prayer that prevails with God is the beseeching prayer where we put our entire soul, stretching out toward God in intense and agonizing desire (Hebrews 5:7).

7. Specifically

Be specific in the things that you ask from the Lord.

8. Honestly

Repentance from sin in your life is a prerequisite to asking in prayer (Psalm 51:1-4).

9. Humbly

We must approach the Lord with a humble and obedient heart (2 Chronicles 7:14).

10. Sensitively

Learn the significance of praying and listening to God (1 Kings 19:11-12).

III. CONDITIONS FOR ANSWERED PRAYER

1. Ask according to God’s will and not yours (1 John 5:14-15). God knows what is best. We can depend upon His mercy and good judgment. Christ Himself was totally yielded to the will of His Father (Matthew 26:39).
2. Forgive others first before you ask God for things (Mark 11:25). Unforgiving attitude breaks our fellowship with God and results in unanswered prayer.
3. Pray in faith – believing (Mark 11:24; Hebrews 11:6; James 1:6-7).
4. Yield to God’s will, making sure that you are not in rebellion to God’s command and will for your life (1 John 3:22; Psalm 66:18).
5. Abide in Christ, as opposed to only coming to God when you are in trouble or in desperate need (John 15:7).
6. Pray to the Father, with the help of the Holy Spirit, and in the name of Jesus Christ (John 16:23-24). You cannot approach God and make requests without AUTHORITY.

IV. DISCUSSIONS