



Prayer of the *Righteous*

Secular Definition: Prayer

An address (such as a petition) to God or a god in word or thought; a set order of words used in praying; an earnest request or wish.

Biblical Definition: Prayer

A spiritual, worship-filled response to God that involves addressing and petitioning Him but also contemplating and waiting for Him.

PRAYER IS AN OFFENSIVE WEAPON

Along with the Sword of the Spirit (Scripture) prayer is a vital weapon against Satan!

God moves in response to the petitions of His children in ministry. While He is sovereign, God desires that His children should pray and petition Him for their needs in ministry. It is His glory to answer them through His power!

PRAYER REACHES THE HEART

Prayer is the only part of ministry that is capable of reaching beyond the external to the heart.

Since it is the Holy Spirit who renews the sinner's heart, prayer is essential to spreading the gospel.

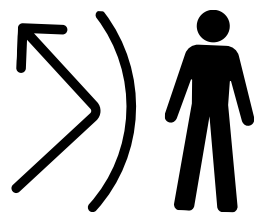


PRAYER TAKES THE FOCUS OFF SELF

Prayer removes self-centered focus and redirects that focus at the mission of reaching the lost for the Kingdom of Jesus.

Petitioning God to move in ministry removes the focus from human efforts and centers it on the power of God for salvation.

GOD



PRAYER BREEDS HUMILITY

Prayers, by their nature, are offered up to one greater than the petitioner. This continuous acknowledgement of man's need for help from the Almighty God fosters a position of humility in the heart of the believer.



1 THESSALONIANS 5:15-18

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."



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Prayer is a Response

When believers pray, they are responding to the love of God that has been poured out on all mankind. We are motivated to respond because God moved first!

Jesus Prayed

During His ministry, Jesus was a man of prayer! He regularly sought out private times and places to spend time with His father. He is our example for how we should approach prayer.

GOD MOVED FIRST

"And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent." - Colossians 1:17-18

It is God who took the initiative, first in the garden by proclaiming that a deliverer would come, then by choosing Israel to be the nation through which He would make Himself known to the world, and finally, in sending Jesus and the Holy Spirit to accomplish and finish the work of salvation.

GOD DESIRES RELATIONSHIP

God's initial movement was not selfish in nature or the result of any need for human fellowship.

God's movements towards man were based in His great love, and a desire for relationship with His creatures, whom He has made in His image.



PRAYER ALLOWS FOR GRATITUDE AND WORSHIP

Through prayer, believers:

- Praise God
- Worship God
- Honor God
- Acknowledge truths about God
- Thank God for His goodness
- Petition God for their needs

THANK
YOU

PRAYER IS AN ASSUMED PART OF HOLY LIVING

Jesus assumes prayer in the life of the believer. See how he addresses it in Matthew 6 - "and when you pray." His attitude to prayer in this context is similar to saying, "and when you sleep." It is an assumed action of life.

Jesus is saying that those who are going to be His disciples will pray because they will be motivated by their love for God to desire a deep relationship with Him. Such a relationship will require frequent and extensive communication.

PRAYER ALLOWS FOR REPENTANCE

Prayer provides an opportunity, context, and format through which the believer is able to petition God for forgiveness and mercy through a reliance on the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Believers do this by humbly confessing their sins openly before God and crying out in broken repentance for His mercy.



Prayer of the

Righteous

Prayer is a Petition

"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."
- Matthew 6:33

God Provides for His Children

"Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"
- Matthew 6:26

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." - Philippians 4:6

God stands ready to answer the requests of His children, and He has promised to give us what is good and right. This promise allows believers to pray in confidence that, even if their sinful hearts are led astray, or their understanding of a situation is imperfect, God will hear their prayers and respond in perfection according to His will and wisdom.

BELIEVERS HAVE TOTAL ACCESS

God has given His children total access to His throne, promising to give them every good thing, and everything they ask for according to His will.

Paul highlights this when he refers to the believer's right to cry out to God as "Abba Father," a term of deep and intimate endearment used by little children towards their father, and a term which Jesus Himself used to address the Father in His time of deepest distress. (see Mark 14:36)

PROVISION IS GUARANTEED

God has promised to provide all the needs of His children. In His sovereignty, He will do this by answering His children's prayer in the best possible way, even if His response looks nothing like what was expected or even prayed for. Believers must trust His will for their lives, knowing that He will provide for them according to His plan and for their eternal good.

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."
- Romans 8:28

ETERNAL GOOD OVER TEMPORAL COMFORT

God's answers to the prayers of His children will always prioritize their eternal good **over** their temporal comfort.

Sanctification is God's end goal for our lives. His primary focus is to transform His children into the image of Christ.

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-4

"First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."



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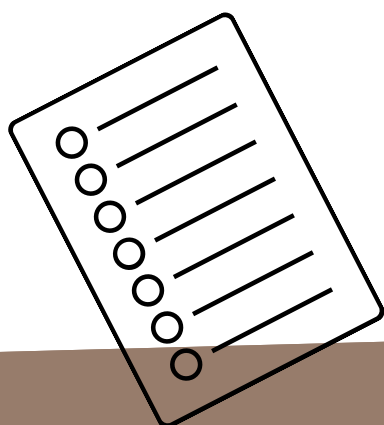
Matthew 6:26

HOW SHOULD BELIEVERS PRAY?

"Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." - James 5:13-16

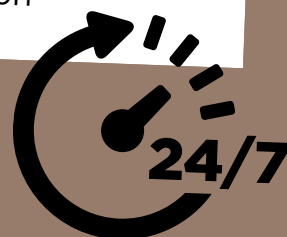
TYPES OF PRAYER

- Adoration/Praise
- Thanksgiving
- Confession
- Intercession for others
- Petition/Supplication
- Cries of distress from trials
- Pleas for rescue from trouble
- Judgement on the wicked



WHAT IS CONTINUAL PRAYER

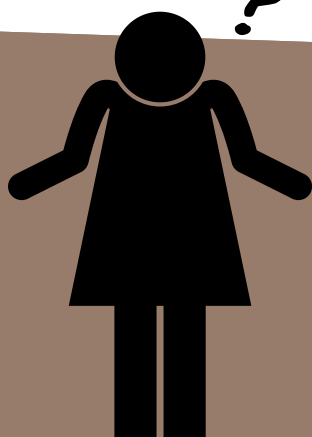
- Prayer is the default reaction to difficulty and trials
- Setting apart time to pray is priority
- Prayer fills every available moment
- Reliance on prayer throughout the day is the norm
- Prayer takes the form of an ongoing conversation



FAITH'S ROLE IN PRAYER

Faith is required for prayer to be effective. Those who pray without faith "must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord." (see [James 1:7](#))

Doubt is destructive to the believer, because it undermines faith in God, the only one who has the power to answer prayer.



RAWNESS AND REVERANCE

The Scriptures are full of examples of godly people crying out to God in prayer. Often times these prayers are a mixture of rawness and reverence as God's children cried out to Him in distress, approaching Him as both their Father and the great God of the universe.

Much can be learned from these examples: The Psalms, the Prophets prayers for blessing or judgement, the prayers of the early church for the movement of the Holy Spirit.