

SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL LITERACY

PRAYER

Summary of Prayer

It is through prayer that the child of God has fellowship with and communicates with their Father. Learning to pray is arguably the most vital lesson for the Christian to learn. Powerful prayer will be rooted in the Word of God, will be seeking the glory of God, and will be based upon a relationship with God through Christ.

Outline of Prayer

- I. Necessity and Example of Praying (Various Scripture passages)
- II. Practical Instruction in Prayer (Various Scripture passages)
- III. Answered Prayer (Various Scripture passages)

* *This study has been prepared using the **King James Version** of the Holy Bible.*

I. NECESSITY AND EXAMPLE OF PRAYING

1. Read Luke 18:1. According to the teaching of Jesus, how important is prayer in the life of a Christian? “And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought _____ to _____, and not to faint”

2. Read Mark 1:35 and Luke 6:12. What example of prayer was set by the Lord Jesus?

(a) Mark 1:35. “And in the _____, rising up a _____ while _____ day, He went out, and departed into a _____ place, and there _____.”

(b) Luke 6:12 “And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to _____, and _____ in _____ to God.”

Note: It is important to remember that while Jesus was 100% God, He was also 100% man. As we read the New Testament, we continually find Jesus praying. He often chooses time in prayer over the most basic necessities of human life (sleep, food, etc.). This shows us the importance of prayer.

3. Read the passages from the book of Acts below to answer the following question: What place did prayer have with the early church?

(a) Prayer was a regular part of church worship (Acts 1:14): “These all _____ with one accord in _____ and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren.”

(b) A life of prayer was given as an evidence of the genuine nature of their converts (Acts 2:42): “And they _____ in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in _____.”

(c) The apostles saw prayer as one of the two primary duties of ministry (Acts 6:4): “But we will give ourselves _____ to _____, and to the ministry of the Word.”

(d) The church responded to times of trouble by gathering to pray (Acts 12:5): “Peter therefore was kept in prison: but _____ was made without _____ of the _____ unto God for him.”

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II. PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION IN PRAYER

4. Read Luke 11:1. Is there a need to be taught how to pray effectively? “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, _____ us to _____, as John also taught his disciples.’”

Note: We receive this teaching directly from God in His Word.

5. Read Matthew 6:5-8. In this passage we find teaching from Jesus on how to pray. What are some of our Lord’s cautions against and descriptions of wrong praying?

(a) Avoid the wrong audience (Verses 5-6). “And when thou _____, thou shalt _____ be as the _____ are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, _____ they may be _____ of _____. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. _____ thou, when thou _____, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, _____ _____ which is in secret; and thy _____ which _____ in secret shall reward thee openly.”

Note: Jesus is not teaching that we should not pray publicly; we should pray publicly with others (see question #3 on the previous page). The Lord is teaching here that we are to seek the audience of God in prayer; not the audience of man.

(b) Avoid the wrong perspective (Verses 7-8). “But when ye _____, use not _____, as the heathen do: for they _____ that they shall be _____ for their _____. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your _____ what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him.”

Note: Jesus is not teaching that we are not to commit much time to prayer. We have many things to seek God about. Jesus spent much time in prayer (Luke 6:12) and the early church spent much time in prayer (Acts 12:5). The point is that we are not to view prayer as bending the will of God (i.e. the longer we pray, the more likely we are going to “get what we are seeking”). There is no need to fill our time of prayer to God with “vain repetitions”. God knows our needs and rejoices to answer our prayers (Matthew 7:7-11).

6. Read Matthew 6:9-13. What are some things we learn from the Lord’s instruction on how to pray?

(a) This example prayer is an *example*, not specific words to be vainly repeated (Verse 9). “After this _____ therefore pray ye” *Note: He did not say, “Pray this.” He said “after this manner”*

(b) Our prayer is to be addressed to the Father (Verse 9). “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our _____ which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name.”

(c) It is proper to begin prayer on a note of praise to God (Verse 9). “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in Heaven, _____ be thy _____.”

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(d) Prayer is primarily concerned with the accomplishment of God's will, not ours (Verse 10). "Thy kingdom come. _____ be done in earth, as it is in Heaven.

(e) We are to ask God for the needs we have in life (Verse 11). "_____ us this day our _____."

(f) We are to ask God for forgiveness for our sins (Verse 12). "And _____ us our _____, as we forgive our debtors.

Note: Jesus provides further instruction on this point in Verses 14 and 15.

(g) We are to ask God for guidance and deliverance (protection) from evil (Verse 13). "And _____ us not into temptation, but _____ us from _____"

(h) It is proper to end prayer on a note of praise to God (Verse 13). "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For _____ is the _____, and the _____, and the _____, for ever. Amen."

(i) Prayer is not to be a selfish matter. *Review this prayer again and notice the continual use of plural pronouns (i.e. "us", "our", "we"). True prayer is focused on God with a heart towards others.*

7. Read Jesus' statement in John 15:16. In whose Name do we pray? "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father _____, He may give it you."

Note: Praying "in Jesus' name" does not simply mean that by attaching His name to anything we ask guarantees a positive answer from the Father. This is not an instruction concerning the words we are to "say" in prayer. Remember, when Jesus taught us to pray (Matthew 6:9-13), He did not instruct us to use this phrase at all. Praying "in Jesus' name" means that we are praying in Jesus' behalf. He has authorized us to approach the Father from His position as Son. We are praying in Jesus' name when our petitions line up with the His petitions. By understanding this, one should be able to see why a growing knowledge of God's Word is vital to powerful prayer. (See also John 14:13-14 and John 16:23-24.)

8. Read the passages below to answer the following question: When should we pray?

(a) Read Psalm 5:3. "My voice shalt thou hear in the _____, O LORD; in the _____ will I direct my _____ unto thee, and will look up."

(b) Read 1 Timothy 5:5. "Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and _____ in supplications and prayers _____ and _____."

Note: Supplications means a petition or requests.

(c) Read 1 Thessalonians 5:17. "Pray without _____."

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Note: Our continual attitude should be one of God-consciousness; seeking and communing with Him throughout the course of the day.

9. Read the passages below to answer the following question: What are some physical postures of prayer mentioned in the Bible?

(a) Read 1 Kings 8:22-23a. “And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his _____ . And he said, LORD God of Israel...”

(b) Read Matthew 26:39. “And He went a little farther, and _____ , and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.”

(c) Read Luke 18:13. “And the publican, _____ afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”

(d) Read Luke 22:41. “And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and _____ down, and prayed”

Note: It is evident that the posture of the body is not what is important – it is the posture of the heart.

10. Read the passages below to answer the following question: Are there any specific things we have been directed to pray for?

(a) Pray for laborers in the field of harvest (Luke 10:2). “Therefore said He unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: _____ ye therefore the _____ of the harvest, that He would _____ forth _____ into His harvest.”

(b) Pray for all saints (Ephesians 6:18). “Praying _____ with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for _____”

Note: Saints is a synonym for Christians.

(c) Pray for rulers and all men so that the Gospel may be able to go forward and souls may be saved (1 Timothy 2:1-4). “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, _____, _____, _____, and giving of _____, be made for _____ men; for _____, and for _____ that are in _____; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have _____ men to be _____, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

III. ANSWERED PRAYER

11. Read the passages below to answer the following question: Under what circumstances can we expect prayer *not* to be heard?

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(a) When we do not pray (James 4:2). “Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye _____, because ye _____.”

(b) When praying with a selfish and ungodly motive (James 4:3). “Ye _____, and _____, because ye _____, that ye may consume it upon your _____.”

(c) When we knowingly have unconfessed sin in our lives (Psalm 66:18). “If I _____ in my heart, the Lord _____ me:”

(d) When we do not fear the Lord and we refuse His instruction and correction (Proverbs 1:28-30). “Then shall they _____ upon Me, but I will _____; they shall _____ me early, but they shall _____ Me: _____ that they hated _____, and _____ choose the _____ of the LORD: they would _____ of My _____: they _____ all my _____.”

12. Read the passages below to answer the following question: What are the conditions for expecting answered prayer?

(a) We should abide in Christ through obedience (John 15:7, 10). *Verse 7*: “_____ ye _____ in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall _____ what ye will, and it _____ unto you.”
Verse 10: “_____ ye _____ My _____, ye _____ in My love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love.”

(b) We should ask in faith (Matthew 21:22). “And all things, whatsoever ye shall _____ in prayer, _____, ye _____.” (See also James 1:6-7.)

(c) We should pray according to the will of God (1 John 5:14-15). “And this is the _____ that we have in Him, that, if we _____ any thing _____, He _____ us: and _____ we know that He _____ us, whatsoever we ask, we _____ that we _____ the _____ that we _____ of Him.”