

Week 6 – Prayer

"If I should neglect prayer but a single day, I should lose a great deal of the fire of faith."-Martin Luther

What Is Prayer?

Prayer is like breathing air. Prayer is to our spiritual life as air is to our physical life. It is what energizes our new nature and refreshes our soul. Without it, our Christian lives become spiritually stagnant. Prayer is the one activity that brings us into an encounter with the Living God! When we pray, we communicate with God – a vital part of our relationship. We should talk with God about every area of our lives. Prayer is more than talking. It is listening and expressing our heart toward God. As a child of God, you are invited to come boldly before His throne.

"Since we have a great High Priest who has gone through the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us...then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need." – Hebrews 4:14-16

Tips On Prayer

Here are some practical steps to help you have a more effective prayer life:

1. Set a regular time and quiet place for your daily prayer time. Read Matthew 6:6. Morning is best.
2. Use a small notebook to help you pray effectively. Make a prayer list.
3. Prayer always moves from general to specific.
4. Prayer should be rooted in God's Word. Read John 15:7.
5. Prayer is talking and listening. It is relational.
6. Wait (a difficult aspect of prayer). Read Psalm 27:14
7. Obedience (1 John 3:21-22), unity with believers (Matthew 18:19, and right motives (James 4:3) help you have a successful prayer life.
8. Have faith! (James 1:6)
9. Remember, a man never stands taller than when he kneels before God in prayer.

Praying A.C.T.S.

Prayer is not just asking God for stuff or running to Him when you are in trouble. Prayer is one of the major ways we build a relationship with God. A simple and effective way to pray is using A.C.T.S.:

- **Adoration**
- **Confession**
- **Thanksgiving**
- **Supplication**

A - Adoration

"Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? Who can show forth all his praise?"- Psalm 106:2

The word **Adoration** means to **worship** or to **praise** . What is worship and praise? In Psalm 29:2, the word for worship means to bow down (attitude of worship). In Psalm 100:2, the word for worship means to serve or work (action of worship). Jesus brings both attitude and action together:

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" – Luke 4:8

List some “mighty acts” God has done in your life:

DAVID’S PRAYER OF PRAISE

“Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name.” - 1 Chronicles 29:11-13

1. Underline the words David uses to describe God.
2. Circle David’s response to God because of who He is.

Spend time in prayer right now and praise God for each item in your list of God’s mighty acts. Give Him thanks and praise His glorious Name! You may even pray some scriptures you have learned.

C - Confession

Another important aspect of prayer is the confession of our sins. We must tell God our sins and He will forgive us. Read the following scriptures on confession.

“If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened” - Psalm 66:18

- Underline what happens if we cherish sin in our hearts. This verse teaches there is a connection between sin and prayer. Sin keeps God from hearing our prayers.

“Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the LORD’ - and you forgave the guilt of my sin. - Psalm 32:5

- Underline what the Psalmist acknowledges before God in Psalm 32:5.
- Circle God’s response to the confession of sin.

Spend time right now in prayer confessing your sin to God. Ask Him to forgive you (1 John 1:9). Thank Him for His forgiveness and ask Him to help you keep from sinning.

T – Thanksgiving

Giving Thanks is a vital part of your prayer life.

“Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.” - 1 Thess 5:18

- Circle in which circumstances we are to give thanks.
- Underline why we must give thanks.
- Why is it beneficial to be thankful?

“Give thanks” is a command and should be done in all circumstances. Romans 8:28 explains this:

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to his purpose.” - Romans 8:28

- Underline the reason we can give thanks in all circumstances. (Romans 8:28)
- Circle how many things God is able to work for our good.
- According to this verse, does God work out things for the good for just anyone?

This verse teaches that no matter what happens in our lives, God is able to use all things, good or bad, for our good! Knowing this, can we genuinely give thanks in all things?

Spend time in prayer right now thanking God for all the things He is allowing in your life, good or bad, knowing that He is able to use everything for your benefit. Doing this demonstrates our faith!

S - Supplication

Supplication is when we bring our requests to God. Too often, we become worried and forget the one Person who can help! Notice this pattern or praying did not start with supplication. Our focus should be on Him in worship then ourselves.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” - Philippians 4:6

- Underline how Philippians 4:6 says we should ask God for things.
- Circle the word that describes what things we can ask God for.
- Underline the result of bringing our requests to God.

Mark 11:22-26 clearly teaches us that unforgiveness hinders our faith and prayer from working. Do you have any unforgiveness towards anyone? Could this be affecting your prayer life?

Have you ever wondered why some of our prayer requests are not answered?

“When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.” - James 4:3

- Why don't we receive what we ask for?

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us--whatever we ask-- we know that we have what we asked of him.” - 1 John 5:14-15

- What is the condition for having your prayers answered?

“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.” - John 15:7

- What is the condition for having your prayers answered?

"If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." - Matthew 21:22

- What is the condition for having your prayers answered?

Daily Application

Use the daily application section below to further your understanding of today's discipleship lesson.

Day 1

Who Should We Pray For?

Read: 1 Timothy 2:1, James 5:16, Ephesians 6:18, and Matthew 5:44

- List all the people we are to pray for in the verses above.

Jesus gives us a model prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Write it down on a piece of paper and practice praying it several times today. Ask God to give you a desire to pray for others.

- Pray the A.C.T.S. prayer right now! Use this sheet until you memorize it.

Day 2

Since prayer is communication between two persons, it can also be described as a dialogue. Write a sentence about the part each of these have in a dialogue between the believer and God.

1. Prayer is the privilege of believers. (1 John 3:22-23)
2. We relate to God like children to a father. (Ephesians 2:4-8, 1 Peter 5:7)
3. God wants to hear what we say. (Psalms 62:8, 65:2, Proverbs 15:8)
4. God delights in and longs for our fellowship. (Psalm 27:8, John 4:23, Proverbs 15:8)
5. We can talk to God about anything. (Matthew 7:7, John 16:24)
6. Prayer can keep us from sin. (Matthew 26:41)

- Pray the A.C.T.S. prayer right now! Use this sheet until you memorize it.

Day 3

Look up and study the scriptures below concerning prayer:

1. What part does the Holy Spirit play in prayer? (Romans 8:26-27)
2. What do these verses teach us about how to pray? (Psalm 145:18, Matthew 6:5-7, 21:22, Philippians 4:6)
3. What vital elements of prayer are found in Acts 4:24-30.
4. What are some of the promises Christ makes to you when you pray? (Matthew 6:6 , 18:20, Luke 11:9-13, John 14:13-14)

- Pray the A.C.T.S. prayer right now! Use this sheet until you memorize it.

How can you share what you've learned about prayer with someone else?