

# Prayer

## I. WHAT IS PRAYER?

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you... Matthew 7:7-11

Prayer is asking and receiving; it is talking with God. It is making your request known unto Him in faith. Our Lord instructs us to ask, seek and knock, because these three words cover the whole spectrum of prayer.

1. Prayer is asking and receiving (1 John 5:14,15).
2. Prayer is seeking and finding (1 John 5:14,15).
3. Prayer is knocking and opening (Matt. 17:14-21).

## II. WHY PRAY?

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Luke 18:1

Pray:

1. Because you are commanded to (Matt. 26:41).
2. Because prayer is the only way to ask for things from God (James 4:2).
3. Because there is joy in prayer (John 16:24).
4. Because prayer will deliver you out of all your troubles (Ps. 34:6).
5. Because prayer can unlock the treasure chest of God's wisdom (James 1:5,6).
6. Because God will reveal great and mighty things to you (Jer. 33:3).
7. Because it is a sin not to pray (1 Sam. 12:23).
8. Because sinners can be saved when they pray in faith (Rom. 10:13,14).
9. Because Jesus, while here in the flesh, prayed often to the Father (1 Thes. 5:17).

## III. HOW TO PRAY

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. Matthew 6:9-13

Our Lord gave this as a model prayer after one of His disciples said unto Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples (Luke 11:1).

1. We are to pray to "Our Father which art in heaven." because He is all-wise, all-loving and all-powerful. We are also instructed to pray in the name of Jesus (John 14:13,14).
2. We are to pray for His will to be done in everything.
3. We are to pray for the coming of the Kingdom (Matt. 25:31-46).
4. We are to pray for our daily necessities.
5. We are to pray for forgiveness, and practice forgiving others.
6. We are to pray for the leading of the Lord, and deliverance from evil.
7. We are to pray in faith (Heb.11:5,6).

## IV. WHERE TO PRAY

Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. Acts 12:5

There was a remarkable change in the prayer life of the disciples after the resurrection of Jesus, and it is noted again after Pentecost. Before the death of Jesus, the disciples slept while Jesus prayed in the Garden (Matt. 26:3-46). But after His death and resurrection:

1. They assembled in the Upper Room, waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit, and they prayed. (Acts 1:13,14).
2. They prayed as they went from house to house (Acts 2:42-47).
3. They prayed in the church when Peter was in prison (Acts 12:5-9).
4. Paul and Silas prayed in prison (Acts 16:25).
5. The most important place to pray is any place where you can be alone with God (Matt. 6:6).
6. We are instructed to pray in all places at all times (1 Tim. 2:8).

It is a great joy to be able to talk with God, any time, any place and under any condition, and to know that He will hear and answer.

## V. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. 1 Peter 3:7

When prayers are not answered, you should examine yourself in the light of God's Word. If you find anything not pleasing to God, confess it, believing God for forgiveness that your prayers may be answered (1 John 1:9).

1. Disharmony between husband and wife will hinder prayer (1 Peter 3:7).
2. Selfishness will hinder prayer (James 4:3).
3. An unforgiving spirit will hinder prayer (Matt. 5:22,24).
4. Unbelief will hinder prayer (James 1:6,7) (Heb. 11:6).
5. Known sin in the heart will hinder prayer (Isa. 59:1,2) (Ps. 66:18).

## VI. DOES GOD ANSWER ALL PRAYERS?

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. John 15:7

There are two requirements for answers to prayer. First, we are to abide in Him. Second, His words are to abide in us. If we meet these two requirements our prayers will be answered.

1. The answer is sometimes immediate (Matt. 14:22-31).
2. The answer is sometimes delayed (John 11:1-44).
3. The answer is sometimes "no." When God answers with a "no," He always accompanies the answer with peace (Phil. 4:6,7) and grace (1 Cor. 12:7-10).
4. The answer is sometimes different from what we expect. We pray for patience and God sends us tribulation because "tribulation worketh patience" (Rom. 5:3).