

6. Prayer

Introduction

Let's perform a test. Take three deep breaths and *hold the last one*. Now how long can you go without breathing? A few days? Of course not! Not even a few hours! The longest humans can last without air is *a few minutes* at best.

Prayer is like that. *Prayer is to our Spiritual Lives as air is to our physical*. It is what *energizes* our *New Nature* and *refreshes* our *Soul*. Without it, our Christian lives become spiritually *stagnant*. *Why?* Because ...

“Prayer is the one activity that brings us into an encounter with the Living God!”

Four Aspects of Prayer

- ❖ Adoration
- ❖ Confession
- ❖ Thanksgiving
- ❖ Supplication

Adoration

The word **Adoration** means to *worship* or to *praise* .

Praise

*“Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD?
who can show forth all his praise?”*
Psalm 106:2

The Psalmist in *Psalm 106:2* uses a common *literary tool* by expressing the same idea in *two different ways*.

- ❖ **Underline** the *equivalent thought* to *“show forth all his praise”*.
To praise God then is to *proclaim His “mighty acts”*.

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

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

You can be involved in every kind of Christian activity without being empowered by the Holy Spirit, except Prayer. Conference speaker, the Rev. Ron Dunn, shares that Prayer alone requires you be right with God because it is a “Man to God encounter”!

Worship

The Hebrew word translated worship in Psalm 29:2 means to bow down or to prostrate oneself. It describes the Attitude of Worship.

In Psalm 100:2, the word worship is a translation of another Hebrew word. Here it means to serve or to work. This verse describes the Action of Worship.

Jesus brings both attitude and action together in Luke 4:8!

- ❖ Read *David's Prayer of Praise* found in *1 Chronicles 29:11-13* below.

"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 honour 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

- ❖ Circle each *characteristic* David attributes to God.
- ❖ Underline David's *response* to God.

Application

Praise God for each item in YOUR list of God's mighty acts. Give Him thanks and praise His glorious Name!

Confession

Another important aspect of Prayer is the Confession of our sins. Read the following Scriptures on **Confession**.

"If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened;

Psalm 66:18

"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 happens if we cherish sin in our hearts according to **Psalm 66:18**. This verse teaches there is a relationship between **sin** and **prayer**. Sin **short circuits** our **Fellowship** with God, and keeps Him from hearing our prayers. (see **1 John 5:14-15** for the importance of God hearing our prayers.)
- ❖ Underline what the Psalmist *acknowledges* before God in *Psalm 32:5*, ?
- ❖ Underline God's *response*.
- ❖ Read the *confession* of *David* after he committed adultery with *Bathsheba* found in *Psalm 51* below.

"Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me."

Psalm 51:2-5,10 & 12

- ❖ Underline the *four things* *David* asks God to do for him at the end of the passage.

Worship is enhanced as we come to know the Attributes and Character of God. These books will open your eyes to the Great God we Worship!

The Knowledge of the Holy by A. W. Tozer

The Attributes of God by Arthur Pink



Daniel 2:19-23
Romans 11:33-36



MEMORIZE!

► Can God forgive unconfessed sins? Why or why not?

► Why do you think God requires us to confess our sins in order to be forgiven?

Genuine Confession results in a desire to obey God. Notice that after acknowledging his sins to God, David prays that God would give him an obedient heart.

Thanksgiving

A third aspect to *Prayer* is Giving Thanks.

*“give thanks in all circumstances,
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”
1 Thessalonians 5:18*

- ❖ Circle in *which* circumstances we are to give thanks (*Thessalonians 5:18*)
- ❖ Underline *why* we must give thanks. The verb ‘give thanks’ is a *command*. God requires that, *as an act of our wills*, we give thanks in *all* circumstances. *Romans 8:28* explains *why* we can do 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. 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? yes no

Application

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 absolutely able to use everything for your benefit*. Giving thanks to God demonstrates our faith!

Supplication

Supplication is the *bringing of our requests to God*. Too often, we become worried and forget the *one Person* who can help! Read *Philippians 4:6* below.

*“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 what *Philippians 4:6* teaches about being *anxious*.
- ❖ Circle the word that describes *what things* we can ask God for.
- ❖ Underline the *result* of bringing our requests to God.

 MEMORIZE!

- ▶ What are some benefits to being a thankful person?

 MEMORIZE!

- ▶ How does God use “bad” experiences for our benefit?

The Sovereignty of God
“The sovereignty of God may be defined as the exercise of His supremacy. Being infinitely elevated above the highest creature, He is the Most High, Lord of Heaven and Earth. Subject to none, influenced by none, absolutely independent; God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases. None can thwart Him, none can hinder Him.”
‘Attributes of God’ by Arthur Pink

 Isaiah 46:10
Daniel 4:35
Ephesians 1:11

 MEMORIZE!

- ▶ What are the two opposite emotions mentioned in *Philippians 4:6*?
- ▶ How is prayer related to each?

Have you ever wondered why some of our prayer requests are not answered? *The Scriptures below explains why.*

*“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

*“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

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

*“If you believe,
you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”*
Matthew 21:22

- ❖ Underline *why* we sometimes don't receive what we ask for in *James 4:3* .
- ❖ Circle what James *means* by 'wrong motives'.
- ❖ Underline the *condition* for answered prayers in *1 John 5:14-15* .
- ❖ Underline the *condition* for answered prayers in *John 15:7* .
- ❖ Underline the *condition* for answered prayers in *Matthew 21:22* .

For Whom Should We Pray

*“I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving
be made for everyone-- for kings and all those in authority, that we may
live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.”*
1 Timothy 2:1

*“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you
may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”*
James 5:16

*“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and
requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all
the saints.”*

Ephesians 6:18

- ❖ Circle *all* the people we are to pray for in the verses above.

Application

- Spend a few minutes praying for all the LORD brings to your mind.

 MEMORIZE!

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- ▶ *Why* does God establish conditions for answered prayers?
- ▶ *What* would you say is the main condition for answered prayers?

▶ When the apostle Paul wrote 1 Timothy 2:1, the governing authority was the **Roman Emperor Caesar**. How do you pray for governing authorities that you may not agree with?

▶ What is the value of confessing our sins to each other?