

Foundations Lesson #2

Prayer

Prayer is simply a matter of talking to God and communing with God. It's a mistake to think of prayer primarily as an exercise or an activity. Prayer is, more than anything else, the development of a love relationship. When we pray, the focus shouldn't be on "what" (what we're doing, what we're praying about, etc.) but rather on "who" (who we're talking to and communing with). Some believers, wanting to learn to pray, have studied Scripture, read books, and listened to messages. Even though there can be value in learning this way, the only real way we will ever learn to pray is by praying.

I. Reasons to Pray

- obedience, faithfulness
 - Romans 12:12 / Colossians 4:2 / I Thessalonians 5:17
- because we are change agents
 - Matthew 7:7-8 / James 5:16b-18 / Acts 9:40 / II Kings 20:11 / Proverbs 21:1 / II Kings 13:4-5
- to satisfy God's heart – We serve a God who has an insatiable appetite for intimacy with us, and we pray in order to satisfy His heart. This is the **most important** reason we pray.
 - Luke 13:34 / Revelation 21:3 / II Corinthians 1:21-22

II. Scriptural Terms Describing Prayer

- seek (highlights the treasure being sought)
 - Jeremiah 29:13 / Isaiah 55:6 / I Chronicles 16:11, 22:19 / Hebrews 11:6
- draw near (highlights the existing distance and the available closeness – also: "come")
 - James 4:8 / Hebrews 7:19, 10:1, 10:22 / Zephaniah 3:2 / Jeremiah 30:21b
- ask (highlights verbal communication and the aspect of request)
 - Matthew 7:7-8 / Matthew 9:37-38 / Matthew 18:19 / John 14:13-14
- call on (highlights the need for help and confidence in the One being called upon)
 - Genesis 4:26 / Matthew 26:53 / Romans 10:12 / Acts 2:21 / Jeremiah 33:3

III. How Jesus Taught Us To Pray (Matthew 6:9-13 [see also Luke 11:2-4])

- **Our Father in heaven** – identifying who we're talking to and communing with
 - I John 3:1 / John 16:26-27 / Galatians 4:6
- **hallowed be your name** – giving God honor, respect, praise, worship, adoration
 - Psalm 29:2 / Revelation 4:11 / Romans 11:33, 36 / Psalm 27:4 / Revelation 7:12
- **your kingdom come, your will be done** – caring first and foremost about **God's** concerns
 - I Timothy 2:1-3 / Romans 10:1
- **on earth as it is in heaven** – where his will needs to be carried out: everywhere on earth
 - Psalm 33:8 / Psalm 83:18 / Psalm 100:1

- ***Give us today our daily bread*** – asking for our needs to be met
 - Matthew 6:8 / Matthew 6:32-33 / Psalm 86:1 / Psalm 86:7
- ***Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors*** – receiving as we give out
 - Matthew 6:14-15
- ***And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one*** – God's help & power
 - Jude 24 / James 1:13-14

IV. Hindrances to Prayer - things that war against our going to God in prayer

- failure to delight in the Lord – Psalm 37:4 / Isaiah 61:10 / Psalm 43:4
- worldliness – I John 2:15-17 / James 4:4 / I Corinthians 3:1-3 / Romans 12:2
- wrong priorities – Colossians 3:1-2 / Luke 16:15 / Matthew 16:23

V. Hindrances to Prayer - things that war against our praying well when we are praying

- sin, iniquity – Isaiah 59:1-2 / I Peter 3:12 / Ezekiel 8:17-18
- for the sake of public reputation – Matthew 6:5-6
- for the sake of personal pleasure – James 4:2-3
- vain repetitions – Matthew 6:7-8
- not treating others properly – I Peter 3:7
- undisciplined thoughts – II Corinthians 10:4-5

Since the matters of knowing God's word and communing with God in prayer are so incredibly important, all believers are encouraged and exhorted to spend at least thirty minutes every day dedicated only to Bible reading and at least thirty minutes additionally every day dedicated only to prayer. The Lord is worthy of our time and our undivided attention!