

1. Reasons to Pray

Ro. 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Col. 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

1Th. 5:17 pray continually;

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Mt. 7:7-8 [Jesus speaking] "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Jas. 5:16b-18 The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.
Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

Ac. 9:40 Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up.

2Ki. 20:11 The prophet Isaiah called upon the LORD, and the LORD made the shadow go back the ten steps it had gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.

Pr. 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.

2Ki. 13:4-5 Then Jehoahaz sought the LORD's favor, and the LORD listened to him, for he saw how severely the king of Aram was oppressing Israel. The LORD provided a deliverer for Israel, and they escaped from the power of Aram. So the Israelites lived in their own homes as they had before.

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QUOTE He, ***The Almighty***, has a great yearning, an immense longing, a holy craving, to be close to every human he's created. Your drawing near to him should be ***primarily*** because it pleases him; it satisfies him; it gives him some of the pleasure he had in mind when he created you.

QUOTE #2 Without question it would be God's relentless pursuit of man and His unimaginable patience and love for man, even though He is constantly rejected or ignored by man. It's the most painful love story ever written, and it is not over. He is in relentless pursuit of a bride, but, to date she seems to have little or no time for Him. So far, it is the greatest of all tragedies, but we know it will have the most wonderful of all endings. He will have the bride that He is so worthy of.
[taken from The Path, by Rick Joyner, pp. 108-109]

Lk 13:34 [Jesus speaking] “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

Rev. 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

2Co. 1:21-22 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

QUOTE #3 If you love someone, you **want** to be close to them.

QUOTE #4 It's impossible to have a healthy relationship to God without having a healthy prayer life.

2. Scriptural Terms Describing Prayer

seek

QUOTE “The problem with most churches is that they have yet to find God”
If that's true, the real problem is lack of seeking Him...

Jer. 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Mt. 7:7-8 [Jesus speaking] “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

NOTE: Seeking God is **not** like seeking a hidden pirate treasure (when you've found it, you're done). No, it's like going on an Easter egg hunt with billions of hidden eggs: the more you seek Him, the more of Him you'll discover. ...not hidden **from** us, but **for** us

Is. 55:6 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

1Chr. 16:11 Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.

1Chr. 22:19a [King David speaking to the elders of Israel] Now devote your heart and soul to seeking the LORD your God.

Heb. 11:6 ...he [God] rewards those who earnestly seek him.

draw near

Jas. 4:8 Come near to God and he will come near to you.

Jas. 4:8(KJV) Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.

Heb. 7:19 ...and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.

Heb. 10:1 ...it [the law] can never, ...make perfect those who draw near to worship.

Heb. 10:22 ...let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith,

Zph. 3:2 She [the city of Jerusalem] obeys no one, she accepts no correction. She does not trust in the LORD, she does not draw near to her God.

Jer. 30:21b ...for who is he who will devote himself to be close to me?' declares the LORD.

ask

STATISTIC Prayer is simply referred to as “asking” about 50 times in the N.T.

Mt. 7:7-8 [Jesus speaking] “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Mt. 9:37-38 Then he [Jesus] said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Mt. 18:19 [Jesus speaking] “Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.

Jn. 14:13-14 [Jesus speaking] And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

QUOTE When we are asking God for something, let's remember that prayer is not a “what”, it's a “who”. Prayer is not primarily a discipline, it's primarily a relationship. It's not mainly about what I'm asking God to change; it's mainly about the One I'm talking to.

call upon

Gen. 4:26b At that time men began to call on the name of the LORD.

Mt. 26:53 [Jesus speaking] Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?

Ro. 10:12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,

Ac. 2:21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

Jer. 33:3 [God speaking] 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'

3. How Jesus Taught Us To Pray

1Jn. 3:1a How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

Jn. 16:26b-27 [Jesus speaking] I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

Gal 4:6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”

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Ps. 29:2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.

Rev. 4:11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

Ro. 11:33, 36 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Ps. 27:4 One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.

Rev. 7:12 Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!

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1Ti. 2:1-3 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. This is good, and pleases God our Savior,

Ro. 10:1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved.

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Ps. 33:8 Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him.

Ps. 83:18 Let them know that you, whose name is the LORD – that you alone are the Most High over all the earth.

Ps. 100:1 Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

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QUOTE

A man comes home from a 14-day business trip. His wife greets him at the airport, saying, "I'm so glad my repairman is back. The drier is making some strange noises; the carpet has come up in the den; the kitchen sink is leaking, and the light above the living room couch is flickering. I'm so glad that you're back so that all my needs can be met."

A woman is on the phone with a friend one morning and she says, "I don't have to talk to my husband today. I don't need any money." Both of these wives have failed to understand some basic concepts involving a love relationship. Unfortunately, many believers have treated God the way these women have treated their husbands. God delights in taking excellent care of each son and daughter he has, but when we draw near to him in prayer, let's do so with the right priority, the right approach, the right heart.

Mt. 6:8

...for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Mt. 6:32-33

For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Ps. 86:1

Hear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy.

Ps 86:7

In the day of my trouble I will call to you, for you will answer me.

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Mt. 6:14-15

[Jesus speaking] For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

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Jde. 24

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy –

Jas. 1:13-14

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

4. Hindrances - that war against our going to prayer

QUOTE

The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless work, prayerless studies or prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but **trembles** when we pray! - Samuel Chadwick

Ps. 37:4

Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.

QUOTE

We are to delight ourselves in the Lord. The truth is that there's no experience we can have which is more delightful than meeting with God. No musical masterpiece, no exquisitely prepared delicacy, no breathtaking scenery, no having sex with your spouse (especially for you husbands ☺), no all-expense paid vacation can compare with having intimacy with the Lord of the universe. Life simply doesn't get any better than drawing near to

God.

The problem arises that our emotions usually don't testify to us that this is true. I'll be honest, for over 20 years, I spent time in prayer mainly out of faithfulness or duty. Whereas it's **far** better to pray because we know we need to pray than not to pray at all, the goal is still for us to pray out of an intense desire, out of an unquenchable longing to be close to our God. We can and we need to delight ourselves in the Lord.

SOLUTION: Ask God to change your heart...

After all, the truth is that getting to have intimacy with God is the ultimate experience of humanity. It's the crowning glory of all that we've been created to do. If our feelings try to testify to us that this isn't true, we need to tell our feelings to shut up because they're wrong, and that we're not obligated to buy what they're trying to sell us. It's the truth that sets us free, and our responsibility is to **believe** that truth.

Is. 61:10 I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God...

Ps. 43:4 Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.

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1Jn. 2:15-17 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world – the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does – comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

Jas. 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

1Co. 3:1-3 Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly – mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?

Ro. 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

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Col. 3:1-2 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Lk. 16:15b [Jesus speaking] What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight.

Mt. 16:23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

QUOTE #5 Payer is to the spirit what oxygen is to the body.

QUOTE #6 As Oswald Chambers has said, "Prayer doesn't equip us for some greater work, prayer is the greater work." In much of the church today, concerts, dinners, and times of fellowship are attended far better than prayer meetings. That's a powerful demonstration of horrible priorities.

I'd like to encourage you, don't look for extra time so that you can pray, **make** the time. Place the proper priority on prayer. Move less important things aside. If you love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, you'll make the necessary sacrifices to spend time with him, and you'll be glad that you did.

5. Hindrances - that war against our praying well

Col. 4:12-13 Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis.

Is. 59:1-2 Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

1Pt. 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

Ez. 8:17-18 He [the LORD] said to me, "Have you seen this, son of man? Is it a trivial matter for the house of Judah to do the detestable things they are doing here? Must they also fill the land with violence and continually provoke me to anger? Look at them putting the branch to their nose! Therefore I will deal with them in anger; I will not look on them with pity or spare them. Although they shout in my ears, I will not listen to them."

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Mt. 6:5-6 [Jesus speaking] "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

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Jas. 4:2-3 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

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Mt. 6:7-8 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

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1Pt. 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

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2Co. 10:4-5 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Addendum: Practices and Principles of Prayer

Lk. 18:9-14 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men – robbers, evildoers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

thanksgiving

Pp. 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

1Ti. 2:1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone –

praise

Ps. 100:4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

Lk. 10:21 At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

worship

Lk. 2:37 She [Anna] never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.

Jn. 4:21-23 Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

confession

Neh. 1:6-7 [Nehemiah is praying] "...let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you. We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

Dan. 9:4-5 I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws.

persistence

Lk. 11:5-13 Then he [Jesus] said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.'

"Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

"Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Lk. 18:1-8 Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

"For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'"

And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

faith

Mt. 21:22 [Jesus speaking] If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”

Mk. 11:22-24 “Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. “I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

Jas. 1:6-7 But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord;

QUOTE Faith is also important on a more basic level. If we have faith, we will pray. If we don't have faith, we won't pray because we won't see it as important. What we see as important and what we believe in, that's what we'll do.

fergency

Ps. 63:1 O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

making requests specific

Mk. 10:51 “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.
The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”

being in harmony with God's will

1Jn. 5:14-15 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.

Jn. 15:7 [Jesus speaking] If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

confidence

Heb. 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

in the Holy Spirit

Jde. 20 But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.

Eph. 6:18 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.

1Co. 14:14-15 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.

QUOTE In Africa, a minister was preaching in a large crusade. During the night, he woke up in tears. As he began to pray, he heard himself saying a strange name, over and over again. The pain he suffered was intense as he continued his prayer. After several hours the burden lifted, and the intercession was complete. The next day the newspapers told a strange story. During the night, a Christian village had been massacred. The name of the village was the same name that the minister had been weeping over the night before. Christ suffered the pain of his people, but he was able to find someone willing to share in his suffering and intercede in the Spirit.

listening

Ecc. 5:2 Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.

Ps. 46:10 “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

Rev. 2:29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

praying in secret

Mt. 6:6 [Jesus speaking] But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

early

Mk. 1:35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Mt. 6:9-11 [Jesus speaking] “This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.’

QUOTE You'll never put God first in your **life** until you put him first in your **day**.

POEM
I got up early one morning
and rushed right into the day,
I had so much to accomplish
that I didn't have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me
and heavier came each task.
“Why doesn't God help me?” I wondered.
He answered, “You didn't ask.”

I wanted to see joy and beauty,
but the day toiled on, gray and bleak.
I wondered why God didn't show me.
He said, “But you didn't seek.”

I tried to come into God's presence
I used all my keys at the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided,
“My child, you didn't knock.”

I woke up early this morning
and paused before entering the day.
I had so much to accomplish
that I had to take time to pray.

time spent

Lk. 5:16 But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

while doing other things

1Th. 5:17 pray continually;