

Prayer: *A Dialogue with God*



Prayer is learning to listen and to talk to God. It is also a conscious desire to *grow in awareness* of God's love for us. In prayer, a very special meeting takes place. God **FIRST** meets us *where we are* with unconditional love and transforming truth. Then we choose to meet and join God in what He's doing. Prayer starts with *listening* and *watching* for God's ongoing and ever-present activity. As we sense God's presence in the "ordinary" places, we can become a part of His amazing work of restoration and healing in this world.

Let's look briefly at what the Bible, God's Word, has to say about prayer. **Prayer...**

- ... completes our **JOY** (John 16: 24)
- ... **opens our eyes** to what is really happening (2 Kings 6: 17)
- ... allows us to draw upon **God's strength** in difficult times (Psalm 46: 10)
- ... opens us to **God's power** (2 Kings 4: 33-35)
- ... offers **Rest and Refreshment** (Luke 5: 15-16)
- ... is a source of **PEACE** (Philippians 4: 6-7)
- ... helps us hear the **Lord's "whisper"** (1 Kings 19: 11-12)
- ... is best when **simple, childlike, sincere** (Matthew 6: 5-8)
- ... becomes effective when our relationships with God and others are **healthy** (James 5: 16)

DEVELOP AN EXCITING PRAYER LIFE:

1. Make sure you have **committed all your life to God** through Jesus Christ. This is the basic starting point for prayer. If you are not sure if you have really done this, have a committed Christian lead you into an understanding and exercise of this relationship.
2. Have a **regular daily time** set aside to be with Jesus in prayer. Look for a time with the least number of distractions. (1 Thess. 5: 17)
3. Talk with the Lord about your day. A simple device uses the word **PRAY:**

Praise God first! Begin with some "Thank you's"
Receive God's Love and Truth. Be still. Listen. Breathe.
Ask for God's Provision. He is already supplying all you need.
Yield to God's Will. Learn to follow the Spirit and not the Ego.

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SOME THOUGHTS IN PRAYING FOR OTHERS:

1. **LISTEN FIRST BEFORE PRAYING.** Listen to what the person before you is *actually expressing*. Listen to what the Holy Spirit would have you pray for them. Remember that the **GIFT OF LISTENING** is the greatest act of God's Love you can give someone.
2. **KEEP YOUR PRAYER SIMPLE AND SHORT.** Sermons are not needful. God really isn't impressed with the number of words you use or fancy theological language. Don't forget to thank and praise Him when making a request of His Power. Simple honesty works pretty well. Be confident that God *will* work through you NOT because you are good but because He is **FAITHFUL**.
3. **BEWARE OF TRYING TO "FIX" THE PROBLEM.** You are there to call the Holy Spirit to do His Work in His Way in His Time. It is OK to allow a person to wrestle with their own tough choices. Let Jesus play the role of savior. You simply be a faithful part of the supporting cast.
4. **USE OF APPROPRIATE TOUCH CAN BE HEALING AND SUPPORTIVE.** A hand on the head or shoulder, anointing with oil, the holding of hands can communicate God's loving presence. Exercise caution when together with the opposite sex when not in a group context.
5. **DON'T BE SURPRISED WHEN YOUR OWN HURT PLACES SURFACE.** When someone else's needs trigger a reaction inside you, accept it as God letting you know that He thinks you are ready for a little healing of your own. Just let Jesus have those feelings that have been stirred up, continue to pray, and later seek the Lord's direction in how He would minister to your pain. Consult a prayer partner or spiritual director.
6. **FOLLOW UP ON THE ONE PRAYED FOR IN SOME WAY.** Check and see how they are doing later that week with a phone call, postcard, letter, or a personal meeting. You pray about what kind of time/energy you are able to give. Remember that as you do it to the "least of these" you do it to Jesus Himself (Matthew 25: 34-40).



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