

*How to Pray, How to Listen
Preparing to Meet God*



Preparing to Meet God

Every believer has a prayer life. But, not every believer has an effective prayer life. When coming to God in prayer, it is important to remember that God is more interested in us than in what we want. So, preparing to meet God in prayer is just as important as the act of praying.

An Effective Prayer Life

- Would you say that your prayer life is effective? Why or why not?
- Read 2 Cr. 7:14-15; Is. 1:15-16. What must we do to have an effective prayer life?
- What does Zech. 7:8-13 teach us about the consequences for ignoring God?
- According to Mt. 14:23 and Mk. 1:35, Jesus went away by himself to pray. When was the last time you sought out a private place to pray?
- Read Col. 4:2, 12 and 1 Thess. 5:17. Should we be committed to prayer?

A Focused Prayer Life

Read Eph. 1:15-19. What does Paul pray for in v. 17? Why? What does Paul pray for in v. 18? Why?

A Practical Prayer Life

- Always, always, always confess your sins before making your requests
- Pray persistently. Don't give up until God makes his answer clear.
- Pray regularly. Set aside a time each day for prayer.
- Pray until you pray! Don't allow distractions to disrupt your prayer time.

Prayer Journaling

Prayer Journal = a spiritual diary; a place to record God's responses to your requests, thoughts, feelings, and insights; a way of remembering God's activity in your life; a way of holding yourself accountable to spiritual maturity.

The Concept of Prayer Journaling

While there are no actual biblical examples of prayer journaling, there are numerous examples of writing down God's activity for remembrance and accountability.

- The Ten Commandments (Ex. 32:15-16)
- Every new King of Israel was to write down God's Law (Deut. 17:18-20).
- Joshua reminds the people of Israel not to be negatively influenced by unbelievers, but to obey what God had written down (Joshua 23:6-8).
- God's helping activity was recorded so that future generations would give Him praise (Ps. 102:18-19).
- John recorded the life of Jesus so others would know the truth about Him and be encouraged by His promises (Jn. 21:24-25; 1 Jn. 5:13).

The Benefits of Prayer Journaling

- When we get discouraged, it helps us remember God's power displayed in our lives (Ps. 77:11).
- Prayer journaling provides a disciplined activity that trains us in godly living (1 Tim. 4:7).
- Prayer journaling reminds us that God answers prayer and increases our trust in Him.
- Prayer journaling helps us put into words our feelings and ideas about God, ourselves, and others. It's a way of "seeing" our feelings.

Ideas for Prayer Journaling

Each page of your journal could include questions like:

- Have I confessed my sins?
- Have I thanked the Lord for His blessings?
- Have I used the time wisely that God has given me this day?
- Have I read through my journal lately?
- Have I thought or spoken kindly to family and friends today?
- Have I meditated upon God's Word today?
- Each page of your journal should contain something for each day.

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Prayer Journal Sample Page:

Date: _____

Have I:

- Confessed my sins?
- Thanked the Lord for his blessings?
- Used the time wisely that God has given me this day?
- Read through my journal lately?
- Thought or spoken kindly to family and friends today?
- Meditated upon God's Word today?

Today I felt like . . .

My prayer request(s) are:

God's answers are:

Insights from my Bible reading are:

The practical steps I will take to change are:
