

Praying with Jesus & Paul

Introduction

What is Prayer?

Prayer is talking with God. Prayer is dialogue, not monologue. Prayer is listening as well as speaking to God.

Prayer is an expression of our dependence upon God.

Prayer is God's ordained means for unleashing His power in our lives and in the world around us.

Why Pray?

Our purpose in prayer is to glorify God as we see His power displayed and His plan worked out in our lives (John 14:13; 17:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:12). Therefore, prayer is aligning our desires with God's desires. Prayer seeks what God wants, not merely what we want.

Prayer is something that can be taught and, therefore, can be learned.

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.' Luke 11:1

Prayer is not only encouraged, but commanded.

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. Luke 18:1

I want men [and women] everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer. 1 Timothy 2:8

Pray for those who persecute you. Matthew 5:44

Pray continually. 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Petitions versus Praises:

Petition: A sincere request to seek God's wisdom and a humble determination to rest in His answer.

Praise: A genuine expression of gratitude for and appreciation of all God has done or will do for us or for others. Praise is another form of thanksgiving, which should be our attitude in bringing our petitions to God. Therefore, all petitions contain an element of praise.

...in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6

What Difference Does It Make?

When you pray, remember to . . .

- Be reverent and humble before the Lord.

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. Ecclesiastes 5:2

- Beware of formalities but instead lean upon the Spirit for help.

We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. Romans 8:26-27

- Pray for other believers as well as yourself or your immediate family.

For I know that through your prayers . . . what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. Philippians 1:19

- Persevere and not give up.

During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death. Hebrews 5:7

- Walk in obedience.

The prayer of a righteous man [or woman] is powerful and effective. James 5:16

- Trust God to answer in unexpected ways.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us . . . Ephesians 3:20