



Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life

Unit 4 – Prayer

Prayer is a vital Spiritual Discipline, second only to the intake of God’s Word. To be like Jesus, we must pray. Knowing that without prayer we will lack Godliness, God expects us to pray.

1. Prayer Is Expected

Matthew 6:5-9; Luke 11:9; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17;
James 5:13; Romans 12:12; Philippians 4:6

a. The Expectation Is Specific

Colossians 4:2; 1Thessalonians 5:17; Hebrews 4:16;

b. The Expectation is Submission

Luke 6:12-16; John 17; James 1:5; Luke 5:16; John 15:5

2. Prayer Is Learned

Psalms 5:1, 19:14; Isaiah 29:13; Luke 11:1-13; Matthew 6:5-9;

3. Prayer Is Answered

Psalms 37:4; 65:2; Matthew 7:7-8; 1 John 5:14; Acts 10:1-5; Acts 12:6-12

How can we learn to pray?

- By praying
- By meditating on Scripture
- By praying with others
- By praying for others
- By reading about prayer
- By reading prayers
- By recording your prayers

Homework – Reflections:

- 1) It is believed that many Christians pray less than seven minutes daily, even though they know that prayer is a vital Christian Discipline. Why might this be so?
 - How do you know when you haven't been praying enough? What are your feelings and concerns during those times?
- 2) What do these verses teach about Jesus' view of prayer? (Matthew 6:5–7, 9; Luke 11:9, 18:1)
- 3) How might you apply Colossians 4:2 and 1 Thessalonians 5:17 in the midst of your busy schedule?
- 4) When we don't speak with a friend for quite a while, it's difficult to know how he or she is doing. Might we compare our prayers to God with communication with a friend? If so, explain. If not, why not?
- 5) Have you ever felt that prayer was more obligation than opportunity? If so, why? If not, why not?
- 6) Why did Jesus pray in "lonely places"? (Luke 5:16)
- 7) Describe a time when God answered your specific prayer.

- 8) Why should our praying be governed by the truth of Scripture rather than by our feelings?
- 9) Has anyone ever taught you about prayer? If so, who? If not, who might you seek out to teach you?
- 10) What role, according to John 16:13, does the Holy Spirit play in your prayer life?
- 11) William Bates, a Puritan preacher, said “What is the reason that our desires like an arrow shot by a weak bow do not reach the mark? But only this, we do not meditate before prayer.... The great reason why our prayers are ineffectual, is because we do not meditate before them.”
- How would you describe the relationship between biblical meditation and prayer? (See also Psalm 5:1, 19:14)
- 12) Thomas Manton, a Puritan preacher, wrote, “It is rashness to pray and not to meditate. What we take in by the word we digest by meditation and let out by prayer.” What is your response to this thought?
- 13) Why do you think more churches today don’t teach about the relationship between meditation and prayer?
- 14) How has this lack of teaching affected the Church as a whole? Your life? The lives of others you know?

- 15) What do you think is the difference between learning “principles of prayer” and learning “phrases for prayer”?
- 16) What book(s) on prayer have you found helpful to growing in prayer? In what ways?
- 17) Read Matthew 7:7–8 again. Discuss the following phrases:
- Ask—and it will be given to you.
 - Seek—and you will find.
 - Knock—and the door will be opened to you.
 - Everyone who asks—receives.
 - He who seeks—finds.
 - To him who knocks—the door will be opened.
- 18) Andrew Murray once wrote, “If you ask and receive not, it must be because there is something amiss or wanting in the prayer.” Do you agree with this statement? Explain.
- 19) Discuss how the following may affect answers to prayer:
- Impatience/lack of perseverance in prayer.
 - Selfish motives.
 - Unrepentant sin in your life.
 - Unwillingness to accept that God may answer in ways that are not obvious.

- Asking for things that are outside the will of God or don't glorify Him.

20) At which times in your life have you felt that prayer didn't work, that God wasn't listening?

21) How does what you've learned in this session relate to this situation?

22) Does persistent prayer tend to develop deeper gratitude toward God? Faith in God? Explain your answer. (See Matthew 7:7–8, Luke 18:1–8.)

23) In what ways does the Enemy sidetrack your prayer life? Be specific.

24) What do you think is the relationship between a Christian's view of God's willingness and ability to answer prayer, the person's love for God, and his or her willingness to persevere in prayer?

25) Think about a time when you experienced the joy of answered prayer. What did you learn during that time that you might apply to your situation today?

26) If we do not persevere in prayer, what are we demonstrating that we believe about God's love for us? About His promises to us?

Models of Prayer

ACTS of Prayer

A – Adoration

C – Confession

T – Thanksgiving

S – Supplication

RESPOND to Spiritual Warfare

R - Resist temptation in Jesus' name

E- Escape with Scripture

S – Search for unconfessed sin

P – Plead the blood of Jesus

O – Overtake ground given to Satan

N – Name someone in fervent prayer

D – Delight in the Lord

Weekly Prayer Log

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Prayer Target

