

CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES COURSE PAPER 6

PRAYER

Bible memory verses: Philippians 4:6-7

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

What is prayer?

We are God's children and need to learn to communicate with Him and let Him speak to us. When we are babies we let our parents know we need something because we cry. As we grow up we learn to speak and can communicate our needs or answer questions.

- 1 Prayer is talking with God (see Jesus's prayer in John 17)
- 2 Prayer is an exercise of faith. (Hebrews 11:6, Matthew 21:22, James 1:5-8)
- 3 Prayer is having communion with God. (1 John 5:14-15)
- 4 Prayer is admitting our need. (Luke 18:9-14)

Who should pray?

Colossians 4:2 "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful"

Matthew 6:5 "When you pray..."

Philippians 4:6 "...by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests."

1 Peter 4:7 "...therefore be clear-minded and self-controlled so that you can pray."

Matthew 26:41 "...watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation " .

1 Timothy 2:8 "...men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer..."

Every disciple of Jesus Christ should pray

How should we pray?

In Luke 11:1 we read that Jesus' disciples asked this same question. Look at how Jesus replied to them. In Matthew 6:5-14 the picture is made even clearer. There are clearly 4 "DO NOTS" and 4 DO'S in this short passage.

DO NOT be like the _____ (verse 5)

DO NOT keep on _____ (verse 7)

DO NOT be like _____ (verse 8)

DO NOT be _____ (verse 15)

But when you pray

DO go _____ (verse 6)

DO close the _____ (verse 6)

DO _____ (verse 14)

DO pray to your Father in _____ (verse 6)

According to Jesus our prayers should be simple and uncomplicated. He gave the greatest key to prayer in Matthew 26:39 when He said, "...not as I will, but as you will." It is not us asking for what we WANT allowing God to tell us what we NEED, and He has therefore purposed to give us.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 suggest that we should "...pray continually..." to be in constant communication with God.

So we should pray

- a) simply
- b) not hypocritically
- c) to the Father
- d) always - Continually and therefore
- e) everywhere.
- f) in the name of Jesus

Why pray?

Matthew 26:41 "...pray so that you will not fall into temptation..."

Matthew 9:38 "...ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send our workers..."

Romans 15:30-31 "...join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. ..."

James 5:13 "Is anyone of you in trouble? He should pray.."

James 5:15 " And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well..."

Prayer involves two aspects:- (see James 4:7)

a) Submission to God - humbling ourselves before Him, seeking of Him a right and straight way (see 2 Chronicles 7:14, Ezra 8:23, Acts 12:5)

b) Resisting the devil - Praying against his kingdom structures releasing the power of God's Word, praying for the saints of God and the work of God. (Matthew 9:38, Romans 15:30-31, Mark 9:29, Matthew 6:13)

Opposition to our praying will arise in three areas:-

SELF The self-life (we sometimes call it "the old nature") Romans 7:18-25

SIN separates us from God and breaks the communion (remedy) 1 John 1:7-9

SATAN he will always oppose our praying Ephesians 6:12

Read Matthew 26:36-46. Think about the opposition in that story.

Conditions for successful prayer life

Forgiving attitude (Matthew 6:14)

Faithfulness (Mark 11:24)

Humility (Luke 18:14)

Correct family relationships (1 Peter 3:7)

Clean lives from sin (James 5:16)

Clear uncontrolled mind (1 Peter 4:7)

In God's will (1 John 5:14)

Persistence (Luke 8:17)

Lack of anger or dispute (1 Timothy 2:8)

Submissiveness (2 Chronicles 7:14)