

Prayer

God has granted us access to the power and grace of His throne through prayer. We can literally enter His courts and directly communicate our thanksgivings, anxieties, desires, and doubts. *Prayer is a necessary discipline for intimacy with God in the life of a disciple.* It is communication with our heavenly Father. We are dependent on God to give us His power, provision, and help for everything in life.

Read Philippians 4:5b-6

Discussion: What does this say about how we should view prayer?

When should I pray?

We can pray to God at any time, for anything. We should have a planned time to pray (most fruitful after/with Bible reading), and pray spontaneously as needed throughout our daily routine.

How should I pray ?

Jesus taught His disciples how to pray in Matthew 6:5-16

To pray for the glory of God *"Therefore, you should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, Your name be honored as holy. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* Matthew 6:9-10

To ask God to meet our needs *"Give us today our daily bread."* Matthew 6:11

To confess our sins, and ask for God's grace and forgiveness. *"And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."* Matthew 6:12

To pray for God's guidance *"And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."* Matthew 6:13

(A.C.T.S prayer method) helps us pray for the things that Jesus taught His disciples to pray for

A – Adoration, begin by praying for the glory of God's character and name. Focus on recognizing His holiness, righteousness, faithfulness, sovereignty, and love. (Pray the things recorded in meditation.)

C - Confession, next ask God for His grace and forgiveness for sin in your life, recognize your need for Jesus daily.

T - Thanksgiving, offer thanks to God for prayer He has answered, and for providing needs in our life.

S - Supplication, ask God for needs in your life, and others close to you. Ask Him to glorify His name by saving the lost. Ask Him to grow your faith, guide your path, use you to make disciples, use your church in the city and globe. It's helpful to make a prayer list for supplications. As these needs grow, it may be helpful to have certain days or times that you pray for specific things.

Praying the scriptures- Adapted from Don Whitney's "Praying The Bible." Our problem in prayer is we say the same old things about the same old things. This routine can make prayer boring, and when prayer is boring, we don't enjoy praying. Praying the scriptures allows God's words to give you fresh ways to pray for the "same old things."

For example, if we pray through **Psalm 23**, read, **"The Lord is my shepherd,"** and thank him for being your shepherd. Ask him to shepherd your family that day, to guide, protect, and provide for them. Pray

that he will make your family members His sheep; that they will look to Him as their shepherd. Ask Him to shepherd you through the decisions you must make about your future. When nothing else comes to mind, go to the next line, **"I shall not want,"** and continue to pray. Simply go through the passage, line by line, praying what you find in the text or what it brings to mind. If nothing comes to mind or you don't understand the verse, go to the next one. You may choose to spend a lot of time in a verse or move quickly through the passage. Nothing says you have to pray over every verse. You don't even have to have full complete meaning of the verse, just pray what it makes you think of.