

PERSONAL PRAYER GUIDE



How to Pray

If you are not sure how to pray, don't despair! Everyone had to begin sometime. Just talk with God respectfully but openly. Talk with Him as your Father. Jesus taught us to pray, "Our Father ...". Recognize God as a loving Father. Recognize Jesus as a Friend and a Brother. Recognize the Holy Spirit as your Comforter and Guide. Come to the Father in Jesus' name (John 14:6; Hebrews 10:19). Begin your prayer with confession of your unconfessed sins. In this way the blood of Jesus cleanses us and prepares us to really relate to God. "Enter his gates with thanksgiving..." (Psalm 100:4). Thank God for forgiving your sins, for coming into your life, for making you His child. Then just talk with God, asking Him for whatever you need. Thank Him and praise Him for His answer. Spend time also asking for His Spirit to help you to pray. Talk to the Holy Spirit. Tell Him you want to know Him. "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us..." (Romans 8:26). The Holy Spirit will guide you into all the truth (John 16:13) and He will teach you to pray.

Preparing Yourself To Pray

- **Prepare your heart for fellowship with God:** (Psalm 24:3-5) Confess known sin in your life (1 John 1:6-9; 1 John 3:21-22; Hebrews 10:19). Forgive all who have offended or hurt you (Mark 11:25-26). See yourself then as dead to sin and sinless in the eyes of God. (Romans 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- **Have a purpose in prayer:** Know what you are going to pray about. It is difficult to pray fervently without knowing what you want or desire from God. We should have a clear-cut, well-defined idea about what we are asking God for. Jesus told us to ask, seek and knock. (Matthew 7:7). In asking, we must be definite. In seeking, our goal is to know God and commune with Him. In knocking (intercession) we must understand what the Lord wants to do and pray the Word for that thing. Sometimes we do not know what to pray for, and so we can pray in the Spirit (Romans 8:26). We can pray in tongues without understanding, even for hours, according to the will of God. However, Paul stated that he prayed with the spirit and with the understanding (1 Corinthians 14:15). Our whole being, including our minds, should be involved in praying. Our minds should understand what we are asking God for. However, we can pray with the spirit (in tongues) when our minds need a rest (Isaiah 28:11,12). The fact remains, however, that when we set ourselves to pray, especially in a group, we must be agreed about what we will pray for (Matthew 18:19).
- **Study the Word:** Know what the Word of God says regarding the thing you are praying for. We must renew our minds with the Word so that we know God's will on the matter without a doubt. God's will is to do what He promises in the Word. By meditating on the Word and letting it transform our hearts as we renew our mind in it, we prepare ourselves to pray in faith. If we don't know what the Word says, there is a good chance that doubt will enter, and if we doubt we cannot expect to receive from God (James 1:6,7)

Principles In Prayer

- **Depend on the Holy Spirit:** In prayer, you should look to the Holy Spirit to help you to pray effectively. He can give you the right words with which you can pray effectively. Its very good to ask the Holy Spirit to help you to pray. Talk to the Holy Spirit as a person, and ask Him to help you to come to the Father in Jesus' name. Rather than rushing in to God's presence and saying many things, it is good many times to quieten your mind and wait in God's presence so you can feel God's heart and pray the things that the Holy Spirit shows you to pray for. We should realize that learning to listen to God is an important part of prayer. We are told to "pray always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:18). It is the Spirit who is to lead us in the kind of prayer we offer to God. He gives us the power to pray. Spend at least part of your time seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). The more filled you are with the Spirit, the more effective will be your whole life with God.
- **Know who you are in Christ:** We must pray to the Father in Jesus' name, not our own name (John 16:24,26; Colossians 3:17) This means that we are basing our approach to God on Jesus' righteousness and goodness, not on our own. We receive His righteousness when we repent, confess our sins and believe that we receive His righteousness. We should know then that "we are the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21) and we can come directly to have an audience with God because of the sacrifice of Jesus in our place. We come as children of God (Galatians 3:26; John 1:12), as members of the royal family of God (Revelation 1:6), and NOT AS BEGGARS or STRANGERS. Therefore when we pray we should expect that God will grant results in response to our prayer. (1 Peter 3:12)
- **Begin with praise:** It is good to begin your prayer with thanksgiving and praise. "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name." (Psalm 100:4). Thank God for answers to prayer, for your salvation. Tell Him how great He is. It is good to use the Word of God to praise God. This is not a form of flattery in order to get God to give you things, but it is only fitting to thank Him and praise Him. Thanking God will increase your faith. Praising God will also increase your faith, since you will begin to fix your eyes on God, His goodness and faithfulness and greatness and power, and not on your problem.
- **Worship God:** Many effective prayer-warriors recognize the importance of spending much time in worship, even up to 80% of prayer time. This deepens our fellowship with God, increases our faith and pleases the Holy Spirit. We are then more likely to really hear His voice and thus pray effectively.
- **Pray the Word:** God's will is to keep His promises to us. In prayer the Word of God should be in our hearts and in our mouths (Romans 10:8). In our prayers we should use the Word of God and remind God of His promises to us. This builds our faith and it also pleases God because it is an expression of our confidence in His Word and His integrity. For example, you can pray "Father, in your Word you say that those who seek you will not lack any good thing. I thank you that you will not lack I ask you for this in Jesus' name. Thank you for it. Amen. " (Psalm 34:10).
- **Let God lead you:** Allow God to lead you to pray for others in the church and their needs, national and local situations, the government, the advance of the Kingdom of God, and the growth of the church. God is looking for people who will stand in the gap with Him in intercession for situations that are beyond their own personal interests. Make God's interests your interests.