

Principles of Prayer

- 1) The proper understanding and application of prayer is critical for all believers.
- 2) In order for a believer to be successful in the CWL, he must engage in consistent prayer.
- 3) We, as believers, are commanded to devote ourselves to prayer (Rom. 12:12, Col. 4:2, 1 Thess. 5:17).
 - a) The command clearly emphasizes the importance of prayer in general.
 - b) Believers are instructed to exhibit an ongoing, continual devotion.
 - c) Clearly, we are not to engage in prayer on an infrequent basis or in an indifferent manner.
 - d) If you are inconsistent, make time for it. Prayer must be a top priority.
 - e) Any believer who fails to regard prayer as a top priority in his life displays a lack of discernment.
 - f) The believer with a weak prayer life places himself in peril in the Angelic conflict (Prov. 1:32).
- 4) Moreover, prayer is not to be used as a last resort when the believer encounters various pressures.
- 5) Instead, prayer ought to be viewed as the first step in any attempt to cope with or handle various pressures that come our way (e.g. Christ: Mk. 14:32, David: Psa. 7:1ff.).
- 6) Remember, as believers, we must not be reluctant to approach God the Father in prayer in all matters (Phil. 4:6-7 cf. Heb. 4:16).
- 7) Proper prayer etiquette:
 - a) The believer must direct his prayer to God the Father. The other two members of the Godhead, God the Son and the Holy Spirit, are not to be addressed (**Matthew 6:6** "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.", **Ephesians 3:14** "For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father...").
 - b) The believer must pray in the name of Jesus Christ (**John 15:16** "You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you." Cf. **Ephesians 5:20** "...always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father...").
 - c) A believer must pray in the power of God the Holy Spirit (**Ephesians 6:18** "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints...", **Jude 1:20** "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit...").
- 8) As a part of his role in the Godhead, the Holy Spirit intercedes on behalf of believers in prayer (Rom. 8:26).
- 9) Categories of prayer:

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- a) Confession of sin (Psa. 32:5, Lk. 11:4, 1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”).
 - b) Thanksgiving (Eph. 5:20, e.g. other +v believers, 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3. Other reasons: God and His essence, sound doctrine, local church, health, living grace, etc.).
 - c) Intercession for others (1 Sam. 7:5-9, 1 Kings 13:6, Phil 1:9, Phm. 1:22).
 - d) Petition for self (2 Kings 20:1-5, Psa. 69:13; 143:1).
- 10) In order to have an effective prayer life, the believer must be self-disciplined in the following areas:
- a) Maintain the FGHS (cf. **John 15:7** “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you.”).
 - b) Grow in the knowledge of sound doctrine in the inner man (**John 15:7** “If you abide in Me, and **My words abide in you**, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you.”).
 - c) Consistency (cf. Psa. 5:3, 88:13).
 - d) Persistence (Col. 4:12).
 - e) Pray about everything (**Philippians 4:6** “Be anxious for nothing, but **in everything by prayer and urgent request with thanksgiving** let your requests be made known to God.”).
 - f) Adjustment to one’s historical niche (cf. 1 Peter 4:7).
- 11) Examples of appropriate objects of prayer (i.e. prayer content):
- a) A petition for Divine wisdom (Prov. 2:3-6; 8:11, James 1:5, cf. 1 Kings 3:3-14).
 - b) Success in making the maturity adjustment (Eph. 1:18-19, Col. 1:9).
 - c) Living grace (Matt. 6:11).
 - d) All of one’s cares (1 Peter 5:7, cf. Psa. 55:16).
 - e) Civic authorities (1 Tim. 2:1-2).
 - f) Authorities in the LC (cf. Rom. 15:30, 2 Thess. 3:1).
 - g) Other believers under testing (2 Cor. 1:3-11).
 - h) Those who are your enemies (Matt. 5:44 cf. Luke 23:34).
- 12) Some characteristics that render prayer ineffective:
- a) OSN activity and failure to maintain the FGHS (cf. Psa. 66:18).
 - b) Rejection of Divine viewpoint (Prov. 1:28-29; 28:9).
 - c) Unbelief or doubt (James 1:7-8 cf. Mk. 11:24).
 - d) Illegitimate motives (James 4:3).
 - e) Lack of compassion (Prov. 21:13).
- 13) Our requests must be according to the will of God (cf. James 4:2-3, 1 John 5:14-15).
- 14) It follows that a successful prayer life is directly related to a believer’s knowledge and application of God’s commandments (1 John 3:22).
- 15) After all, if one doesn’t have knowledge of sound doctrine, how will he know what to pray for? He won’t.....

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- 16) The believer ought to recognize that prayer is an incredible privilege and blessing (Eph. 1:3).
- 17) Carefully consider your prayer life and don't neglect it.