



# CAPITOL COMMISSION

## Effective Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)

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Dave DePue / (785)249-7604 / www.capitolcom.org / dave.depue@capitolcom.org

### *Challenging class discussion questions:*

*Why pray?*

*Who can pray?*

*How do we pray?*

*Who do we direct our prayers to?*

*What are some results of prayer?*

### INTRODUCTION

You have certainly noticed that there are a few things that are out of your control. Among these are health, weather, natural disasters, and other people (and perhaps yourself)! Prayer is our key tool to deal with the stress of living. This Bible study addresses how to pray and what we might expect from this spiritual activity.

### WHY PRAY?

***Philippians 4:6-7a Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand.<sup>1</sup>***

Jesus assured the disciples that He brought peace as He greeted them at each group appearance after His crucifixion. Peace with God is the most worthy goal. What about peace in the world around us? The apostle Paul tells us how to work toward peace in the land. ***"First of all, I encourage you to make petitions, prayers, intercessions, and prayers of thanks for all people, for rulers, and for everyone who has authority over us. Pray for these people so that we can have a quiet and peaceful life always lived in a godly and reverent way. This is good and pleases God our Savior. He wants all people to be saved and to learn the truth (1Timothy 2:1-4).<sup>2</sup>***

Prayer is needed first, translated from the Greek "protos" meaning "highest priority". The most effective way to strive for peace is to pray for our government leaders and others.

### HOW TO PRAY

***Matthew 6:9-13 "Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one".<sup>3</sup>***

Jesus gave this model prayer in response to the disciples' request to instruct them. The following explanations may be helpful:

Change the pronoun "our" to "my" in personal settings. Reflect on our holy God enthroned amidst the angelic hosts (Revelation 4:2-11).

Welcome Christ's return for His people as God's purpose and will are fulfilled on earth (Revelation 22). Help us with our daily needs (Matthew 6:25-34).

Realize that as sinners, we are spiritual debtors for violating God's laws. Christ paid our debt. We must have mercy on those who offend us (Matthew 18:21-35). God does not tempt us (James 1:13). However, He will allow trials to build our character, including subjecting us to Satan's assaults (Luke 22:31-32) (Job 1:6-12).<sup>4</sup>

***Jesus reminds us that we are to pray to God, an audience of one. "When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. When you pray, don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him (Matthew 6:5-8)!<sup>5</sup>***

### BIBLE STUDIES – DURING SESSION

LEADERS/LEGISLATORS: WEDNESDAYS 7 – 7:50 A.M., CAPITOL - ROOM 142 SOUTH  
STAFF & GUESTS: WEDNESDAYS NOON HOUR CAPITOL – ROOM 142 SOUTH

## Effective Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13))

### PRAYING IN THE NAME OF JESUS

**John 14:13** “Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son”.<sup>6</sup>

Would any of us face a judge without legal counsel? Jesus offers to intercede for us (Mark 16:17, John 14:14, 15:7, 15:16, 16:23-24). Jesus, our counselor is the favorite Son of the Judge! Review this transcript of one of His conversations: “*I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was*” (John 17:4-5)<sup>7</sup>.

Andrew Murray, in his classic text on prayer<sup>8</sup>, reminds us of the intimate relationship that Jesus shared with His Father: “*I knew that Thou hearest me always*” (John 11:42).

Some people might not have their prayers answered! Solomon gives us a warning: *The LORD detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but he delights in the prayers of the upright (Proverbs 15:8). The LORD is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayers of the righteous (Proverbs 15:29).*

### A PRAYER THAT’S ALWAYS ANSWERED

**Romans 10:12-13** *For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*<sup>9</sup>

The Scriptures repeat this promise in Ephesians 2:5, 8, 2 Corinthians 2:15, Acts 2:21, 4:12, 16:30, Luke 8:12, James 5:15, Hebrews 7:25, Joel 2:32a and Revelation 22:17. Have you accepted Jesus’ payment for your sins? 19<sup>th</sup> Century philosopher Will Rogers said: “It is ok to make peace with God between the saddle and the ground but you ought to consider it sooner.”<sup>10</sup>

### RESULTS OF PRAYER

**Philippians 4:6** *Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.*<sup>11</sup>

Daniel prayed and received a vision of the future of his nation (Daniel 9:20-23)

Jeremiah prayed and was able to advise his people on their conduct after a conquering nation took them into captivity (Jeremiah 29:4-9).

Jesus prayed all night before choosing His twelve key campaign team leaders (6:12).

Jesus prayed for His future followers and team members (John 17:20).

A Roman Centurion (Cornelius) prayed for more insight from God and was sent a preacher (Acts 10:30).

The Church prayed for Peter, their pastor who was unjustly imprisoned and he was released (Acts 12:5-11).

At dawn one Saturday, my wife prayed that the neighbor’s chainsaw would not start. She enjoyed another hour of precious sleep.

Please reflect on some of your answered prayers.

### CONCLUSION

Prayer is important however, there is a hidden purpose for us to seek. King David found it and filled the psalms with his reflections. “*Be still and know that I am God*” (Psalm 46:10). Job writes of this. “*Can you understand the mysteries surrounding God All-Powerful? They are higher than the heavens and deeper than the grave. So what can you do when you know so little*” (Job 11:7-8). The main goal is not necessarily to have our prayers answered but to know God and fellowship with Christ. However, there is a major barrier for us to overcome. “Some of God’s best truths, like priceless treasures, are hidden in depths most folks never take the time to search out.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Bible. New Living Translation. (Tyndale House). 2004.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Bible. GOD’S WORD Translation. (God’s Word to the Nations). 1995.

<sup>3</sup> The Holy Bible. New Living Translation. (Tyndale House). 2004.

<sup>4</sup> John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible. (Thomas Nelson Inc.). p1371.

<sup>5</sup> The Holy Bible. New Living Translation. (Tyndale House). 2004.

<sup>6</sup> The Holy Bible. New American Standard. (The Lockman Foundation). 1995.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Murray. With Christ in the School of Prayer. (Fleming H. Revell Co.) 1895.

<sup>9</sup> The Holy Bible. New International Version. (Biblica). 1984.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.cmgww.com/historic/rogers/quotes5.htm>

<sup>11</sup> The Holy Bible. New Living Translation. (Tyndale House). 2004.

<sup>12</sup> Charles Swindoll. Intimacy with the Almighty. (Word Publishing). 1996. p15.