



## Outer Growth - Prayer

**He will regard the prayer of the destitute,  
and not despise their prayer.**

*Psalms 102:17*

**Personal** - Isaiah 41:10

**Read** - Isaiah 1:18

**Acknowledge** - Exodus 23:22

**Yahweh** - Isaiah 26:4

**Example** - John 13:15

**Resistance** - Luke 22:45

Pray is to plead, call for help, an expectation for a solution. To come to the Lord openly to pray for others, then ourselves. So, what is prayer? Prayer is to plead for something or for someone, especially to a deity. For believers, it is a prayer to the Almighty God, through His Son, Jesus Christ. The Son of God is the link between God and His people. There are three ways a person will approach prayer: they will either request help, come begging, or approach with glorification and honor.

Many of us have relationships with family, friends, neighbors, and encounter all kinds of people each day. Some of the folks we know, they call and say, "Hi, how are you? I need something, or can you do this for me? The next time you hear from them, it is the same situation. How would you feel?

Other people we know will naturally need a favour. Such as knowledge on something, or how to do this or that, and other times, to see how we have been and if all is well. However, it is rare for people we know to call us and express their gratitude. "Hi, I was just thinking of you to call and say how happy I am to have someone like you as my this or that." For

believers, how do you think God feels about His people when they only call upon Him in prayer for something, and not to show their gratitude?

A pastor shares an encounter he had with God during prayer. He expressed that the Lord revealed to him that many call upon Him in prayer about what they want, but do not ask what He wants. The pastor could only say, "I am sorry, my Father, forgive us for how we have approached you and treated you like this." What would you say if God expressed this moment to you?

Is there a difference between pray and prayer? Visibly, the spelling differs. To pray is a verb: To petition or solicit help from a supernatural or higher being. A prayer is a noun: A practice of communicating with one's God. It can also be a collection of texts, formulas, body positions, and rules the person is required to follow.

Biblically, to pray and prayer come together. There are at least three instances, with two in the Old Testament, starting with Second Samuel seven, verses twenty-seven, "For thou, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee." The other in Nehemiah one, verse eleven, "O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer." The one in the New Testament is from Luke six, verse twelve, "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."

The physical view and the spiritual perspective are far different. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts," as in Isaiah fifty-five, verse nine. Prayer is to target something, to be specific. The word is also associated with fasting. "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting," as in Matthew seventeen, verse twenty-one. The other is First Corinthians seven, verse five, "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that

ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." Prayer is a spiritual weapon for believers in Jesus Christ against the enemy.

Prayers are said and recited to deities all around the world. For believers, God hears the cry of His people when they call out to Him in prayer. The bankrupt, the poverty-stricken, the poor, the needy, the beggar, the ones that desperately need help, the Lord will "look upon" or "He turns Himself" to their prayer. God does not seem to turn away from them and disregard them. Treat it not with contempt nor pass it by unheard.

This is stated as one of the reasons why the nations would be struck with awe - that God, the infinite God, would hear the prayers of those who were so poor, so powerless, so friendless. There is, in fact, nothing more suited to excite wonder than that God does hear the prayer of poor, lost, sinful people. He will accept and answer. "This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles," as in Psalms thirty-four, verse six. A heartfelt prayer to God can change the circumstances.

For believers, prayer is private between God and His people. Particular and special that comes from the heart. "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." is from Isaiah forty-one, verse ten. A believer or Christian does not have to be a scholar or educated to connect with God through prayer. A simple prayer to a Mighty God is best.

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Prayer is not only from the heart, but also can be from His holy scriptures. Reciting and using

Bible verses in prayer according to the circumstances is a blessing. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," as in Hebrews four, verse twelve. However, the approach for believers towards the Father should be humble and respectful, and not commanding and demanding. It should not be like this: "Now, you said in your Word, Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith," I have done that." THIS IS THE WRONG WAY TO APPROACH GOD THE FATHER!

The correct way to reverence Him is by giving thanks for the privilege of having prayer and connection with Him. "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Quoting scriptures according to the circumstances while in devotion to God is the best way. Directly quoting without adding remarks or comments before and after. God is not the servant: believers are His servants. To read the scriptures during prayer will draw His attention because the Word is God, as in John one, verse one, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

However, to do this with an impure or angry heart will profit nothing. God knows the heart of everyone and who is His and the hearts that are towards Him. Prayer with scripture is to the Father through His Son, Jesus Christ, in which believers have a relationship with Jesus Christ through salvation. Therefore, these scriptures, written by the Holy Spirit through spirit-filled authors and apostles, are best in prayer. Prayer is to acknowledge. Who? The Father. The Almighty God who made all things. Many believers believe that their prayers are so special, which is why they get their answers. No! Prayer begins with the condition of our hearts.

To acknowledge God is to know Him in spirit and in truth, for the "Word is God."

Acknowledging the Lord is to depend on Him, not our prayers. Prayer is to be done in secret because it is to the Father and not anyone

else. Prayer is not for a show, or vain repetitions, or competing to be first, or comparing ourselves to others. Jesus gives the word in Matthew five, verse eight, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Acknowledging includes hearts, minds, and emotions, in tune with the heart of God, and our prayers. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths, as in Proverbs three, verse six. The songwriter has a song about prayer and hearts in tune."

*God answers prayer in the morning,*

*God answers prayer at noon.*

*God answers prayer in the evening,*

*So keep your hearts in tune.*

Prayer is effective in a believer's life to God because of Jesus Christ. There is no other name or religious being that prayers can have access to God than through the Son of God. The name of Jesus redeems and saves lives, not the carrier. Only one man, called Jesus Christ, died on the cross to save sins. And no other family member, public figure, deity, but Him.

God will keep in perfect peace those who remain steadfast and faithful to the Lord. In times of trouble, believers must continually strive to trust, hope, and keep their minds in prayer to the Lord. Saints of God must place their trust in Him because He is our Rock who endures forever. He is a sure and firm foundation.

Prayer examples are in both the Old and New Testaments from servants of God. There are prayer openings of reverence and gratitude towards God, as in the example of Solomon's prayer dedication opening to the Lord in First Kings eight, verse twenty-three, "And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart." The full prayer continues until verse fifty-three for the entire example.

Another one is Hezekiah's prayer in Second Kings nineteen, starting at verse fifteen, "And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth." Hezekiah continues until verse nineteen of the

same chapter with this prayer. Both Hezekiah and Solomon acknowledge God for who He is before going into detail concerning their matters. However, God knows the condition of the heart if their prayers were sincere or not. Therefore, no one can fool God.

A prayer of David from Psalm seventeen asking for deliverance from the wicked, beginning in verse one, "Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips." Another one is at the start of Psalm sixty-four, from David again, "Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy." However, there are some prayers for solutions to conflicts, situations that may require a period before the answer and victory are granted. Sometimes, the problem may be so deep that a simple instant prayer will not be adequate for circumstances such as these.

In the New Testament, there is a model prayer for those who desire to do so, beginning from verse nine until verse thirteen, of Matthew six.

After this manner, therefore, pray ye:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Prayer will encounter some form of physical resistance. Jesus finished His prayer in Luke twenty-two, verse forty-five. However, He found His disciples sleeping. "And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation," as in verse forty-six of Matthew twenty-two.

There is a reason for this slumbering. God mentions the "spirit of slumber," which means it does exist. The opposition to prayer is slumber, which is to sleep. The body requires at least eight hours each day. However, many nowadays average between five to six hours, with all the distractions and things involved in life now. Those who desire prayer but find themselves sleeping while doing so can mean one of two things: either tired, due to lack of

sleep, or the flesh is dominating the inner person, which is the spirit.

Jesus said to His disciples, Why sleep ye? This means "Why are you sleeping?" Ye means you. Many believers desire prayer to the Father through Jesus Christ, but are unsuccessful due to slumber.

If an employee is sleeping on the job, they are in trouble for lack of productivity. This can be for the believer who fails to follow through in prayer when the opportunity presents itself. Jesus continues saying, "lest ye enter into temptation." Prayer to the Father from a believer enables them to be alert when temptation comes, and God will make a way for them to pass or escape it. However, a person who seldom engages in prayer to the Almighty God opens the door for the devil to persuade them to fall into temptation. Not able to spiritually discern the trap the enemy would have them fall into.

Prayer involves disciplining the flesh and bringing the inner person alive. The self will get agitated when an individual decides to engage in prayer because it does not want to yield. Flesh is against the spirit and spirit is against the flesh, as in Galatians five, verse seventeen. The devil will also counter with distractions such as phone, friends, family, and other things he has in his black book about us for our flesh to succumb to and make us forget about prayer.

So what is prayer? A heartfelt message to the Almighty God. There is no need for an appointment with God in prayer. No matter day or night, the Lord is always ready to hear. He will not ignore or disregard those who are cast down and come to Him sincerely. Prayer can come from anyone, from anywhere, at any time, who yearns to speak to Him in humbleness and honesty. "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer, as in Psalms sixty-one, verse one.