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Train & Multiply™

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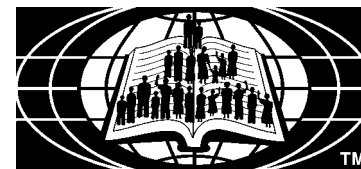
How to Pray



Pastoral Leader Training Booklet

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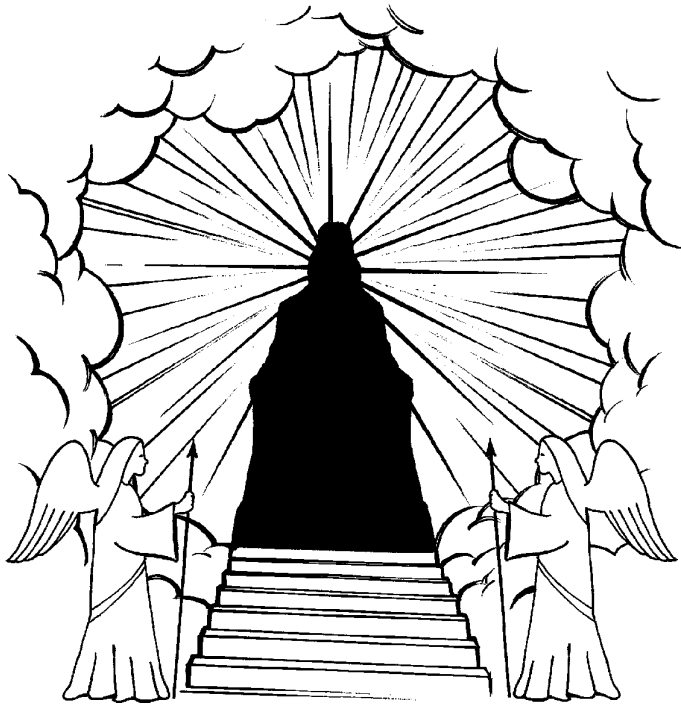


T&M™

Ask God to use this study so that you and your group may learn to pray better.

PRAYER IS A PRIVILEGE

By the sacrifice of Christ we have access to the throne of Almighty God.



After Adam and Eve sinned, angels guarded the holy presence of God so that no sinner could come near. (Genesis 3:24)

Write down some of the things that you are asking God for now.

In six months' time, read this list again. You will be pleasantly surprised to see how God has answered your prayers.

PRACTICAL WORK

- Pray daily, for a good while (Matthew 26:40), following the example our Lord Jesus gave us in Matthew 6:5-13.
- Teach the Christians of your church to pray every day, according to the model of Matthew 6:9-13. Pray with them to help them start. (If anyone does not know how to pray, he can repeat phrases after you.)
- Learn John 16:24 by heart:
“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”
- Keep the brethren informed of God’s answers to prayer, to encourage them in their intercession.

SUMMARY TEST

1. Do you pray every day, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No, but I will start. I will ask God to put the desire in my heart.

2. Do you pray for those who govern your country?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No, but with God's help I'm going to start.

3. Do you pray for the unconverted?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No, but I'm going to start.

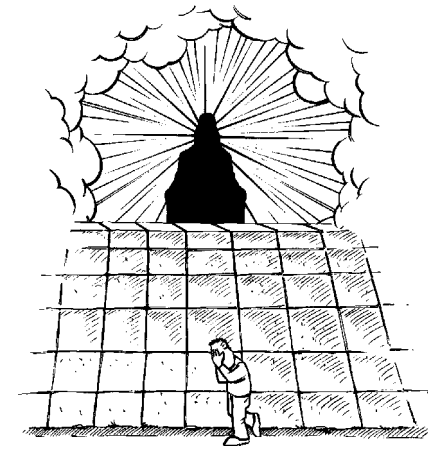
4. Do you praise God in your prayers?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No, but I'm going to start.

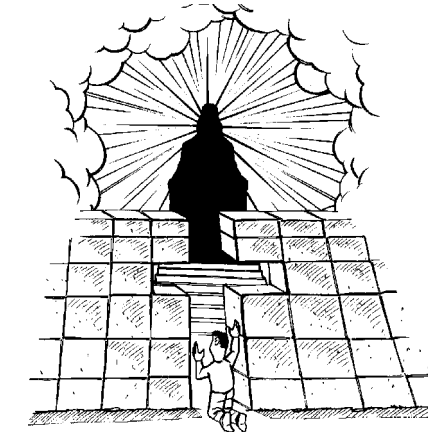
5. Do you thank God for your food, and other blessings?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No, but I'm going to start.

Sin separates men from the Most Holy God. Our prayers will not go through this barrier, without a mediator. (Isaiah 59:2)



But Jesus Christ, by His death and resurrection, opens the way.



We approach the King of kings in prayer.
Jesus Christ has cancelled our guilt and sins,
and we come near to the Father through Him.

THE BIBLE SAYS... *“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way... let us draw near to God with a sincere heart...”*

(Hebrews 10:19-22)

This is why we pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men...”

(1 Timothy 2:5-6)

What prevents ordinary men from approaching God?

MORE BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF PRAYER

- Psalms 8, 31, 51, 84, 139.
- Daniel 9:1-19.
- The Lord: Matthew 26:36-42, John 17.
- The Church in Acts: Acts 4:23-31.
- In heaven: Revelation 5.



Jesus Christ invites you to pray. God wants fellowship with you.
Your prayer is precious to Him.

He wants you to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Seek Him, then,
with hunger and thirst, with a real desire to know and love Him more
and more. He will reward you with a sense of His presence.

MOST IMPORTANT:

Knowing how to pray, and praying, are very different
things in practice. Jesus Christ wants us to pray
in earnest. He says: “Pray” and we obey.

We put this word into practice. (James 1:22) This is what is most
important. God will do great things in answer to our prayers. Let’s
make it a daily habit.

As a review of this study, read and meditate on Matthew 6:5-15.

☐ Mark this box when you have done so.

Who is the only mediator between God and sinful man?

What did the Lord Jesus Christ do so that we could draw near to
God through Him?

Why do we not pray to the saints or to the spirits?

We pray to the FATHER (Matthew 6:6-9), in the name of the SON
(John 14:13, 20:31), with the help of the HOLY SPIRIT. (Romans
8:26-27) Jesus Christ is the only mediator. God forbids us to
communicate with those who have died. (Deuteronomy 18:11)



PRAYER IS A COMMAND OF CHRIST

The believer who loves God wants to talk to Him. When people love each other, they want to communicate. Prayer enables us to live for Christ.

Watch and pray!
(Mark 14:38)



Don't expect to feel something special every time you pray. Feelings are not important; in prayer our emotions have little value. Prayer needs faith. We trust God and know that He hears us. Pay no attention to how you feel.

We are easily distracted. When this happens, concentrate on God. Discipline yourself to think on the "things above." (Colossians 3:1-20)

PRAYER IS INTIMATE AND PERSONAL

When you are praying, remember that God is there, beside you. You cannot see Him, but you can be sure that He is in the room with you. When you remember that He is listening, it's easy to pray.



If we sin, we confess it as soon as we realize we have done wrong.
When we confess our sins, and are truly repentant, God forgives us.
(1 John 1:9)

PRAYER MUST BE SIMPLE

We pray with the meekness of an obedient child. We must not tell God how He should answer our prayer. We leave that to Him.

The answer may not be what we expect, or may not come immediately. God is our Creator, and knows our condition better than we do. He will answer in the best way.

If God doesn't answer a particular request, but you believe that it is His will, keep on praying patiently. Jesus Christ commands us to persevere in prayer. (Luke 18:1-8) He may answer your prayer later, or give you something better. If not, what you asked for may not have been according to His will. We shouldn't go on asking once the Lord has shown something is not His will for us.

Let us teach the new believers to pray. Have you done so?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ I will start now.

The obedient believer spends time every day, praying alone. The Lord commands us:

“But when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues... to be seen by men ... When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen.”

(Matthew 6:5-6)



Why do we pray?

- ☐ So that people will pay attention to us.
- ☐ So that people will hear us.
- ☐ To speak to God alone.

The hypocrites prayed so that people would look at them, and say how religious they were. Pagans, using many words, repeat the same things over and over, so that their deaf gods will hear them. Let us not be like them. (Matthew 6:5-8)



When should we pray?

We pray every day, and every moment we can. Psalm 5:3 says: *"Morning by morning, O Lord, you hear my voice;... I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation."*



GOD ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS WHEN WE YIELD TO HIM

We must become as humble little children before God, eager to obey Him, for Him to answer our prayers. (John 15:7, 1 John 3:21-22) He wants us to obey what the Bible says. Any disobedience to Him can prevent our prayers from being answered. (1 Peter 3:12)

The Bible mentions five things that can hinder our prayers from being answered:

- Not wanting to forgive someone or not seeking reconciliation when we know in our hearts that God wants us to be the peacemaker. (Matthew 5:23-24, Mark 11:25)
- Asking God for something through pride or selfishness. (James 4:3, 1 John 5:14-15)
- Asking without faith, lacking faith in God, or doubting. (Mark 11:23-24, James 1:6-7)
- Lack of consideration and respect for your spouse. (1 Peter 3:7)
- Not living in harmony with your neighbor. (Matthew 5:23-24)

- We pray when we go out with other Christians to witness about the Lord Jesus Christ.
- When you go out to evangelize, and your companion is speaking to someone, pray in your heart.
- We pray “continually”. (Ephesians 6:18) The Lord wants us to be in fellowship with Him all day. Make the most of every minute to speak to God. Although your hands may be busy, your mind and heart are given to God in prayer. Try this, and you will be happy with the result!

“Be persistent in prayer and keep alert as you pray, with thanks to God.”

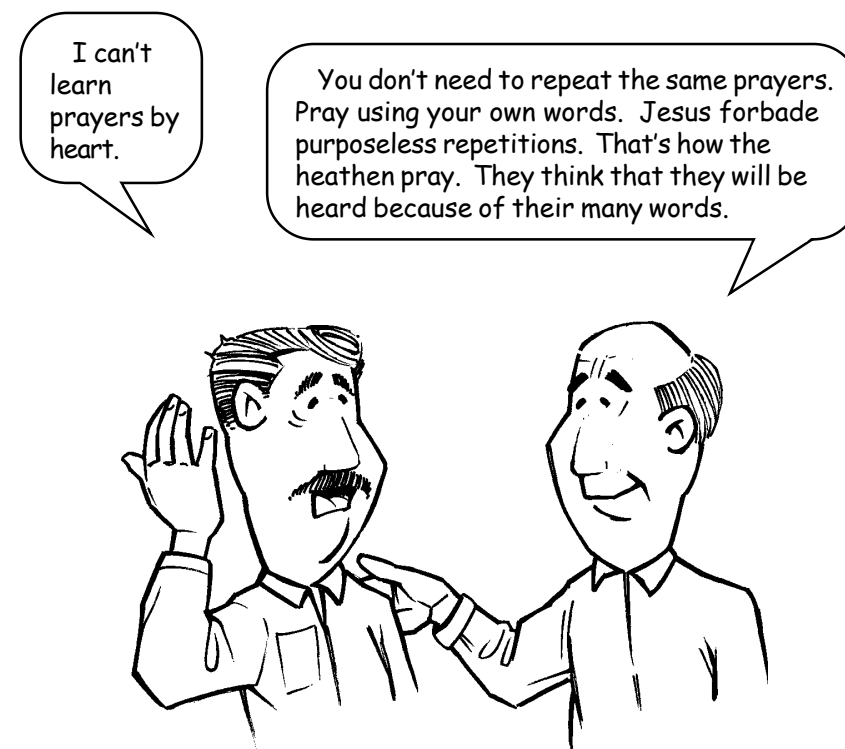
(Colossians 4:2)

What would you like to change, about your practice of prayer?

When will you normally have your longest time of private prayer?

- ☐ In the morning.
- ☐ At noon.
- ☐ In the evening or at bedtime.

We also give thanks before each meal.



We should pray using:

- ☐ our own words.
- ☐ only memorized prayers.

It is best to pray the way a child talks to his father.

We should pray every day together with our families. Let's teach our children to pray. Why do we teach our children in this way?

PRAYER HAS SEVERAL PURPOSES

In the "Lord's Prayer", our model prayer (Matthew 6:9-13), the Lord Jesus shows us what to include in our prayers:

1. Praise God.

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." We enter God's presence with praises, thanking God.

Concerning fasting:

Fasting (going without food) is not given in the New Testament as a command. Jesus and the apostles fasted while they prayed to prepare for serious tasks. (Matthew 4:1-11, Acts 13:1-3) Jesus warned against fasting for the wrong reasons. He rebuked the Pharisees for fasting merely to appear holy. Hindus and Muslims fast in an effort to gain merit simply by repeating a routine ritual. Some Christians find it helpful to give up for a time other things beside food, such as entertainment, a hobby or even sleep, in order to pray and meditate on God and His will.

PRAYERS ON OTHER OCCASIONS

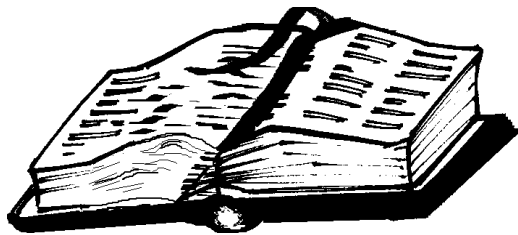
- We give thanks before every meal.
- We pray with our family. We meet once each day to pray. At the same time we can also sing praises to God and read the Bible.
- Prayers before meals and with the family are simpler and shorter than our time of prayer alone in the morning. Let's not tire our children.

PRAYER CAN BE MORE EFFECTIVE TOGETHER WITH FASTING AND VIGILS

There is no command about fasting or all night “vigils”. But in the New Testament fasting was a normal activity for Christians. Jesus Christ himself undertook an all night vigil at least once. (Luke 6:12)
The Lord also fasted before beginning His ministry. (Matthew 4:1-2)

If you fast or undertake a personal vigil, don’t tell everyone! That would be hypocrisy.

The Lord Jesus says: *“But when you fast, put oil on your head, and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father who is unseen...”*
(Matthew 6:17-18)



“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(Ephesians 5:18-20)



Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, praised God in these words:

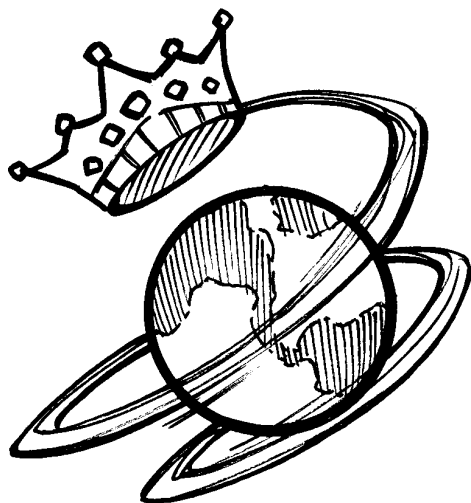
“My soul praises the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Almighty One has done great things for me - holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.”



(Luke 1:46-50)

2. Extend the reign of God on earth.

“...your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven...”



“I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone —for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

(1 Timothy 2:1-4)

God can speak through dreams, prophecies, or directly to our minds. Nevertheless, all this must agree with what the Bible says. God does not contradict himself.

When you have finished speaking to God, stay in an attitude of prayer a while longer. Fix your thoughts on Him.

Meditate about Him and what He says in the Bible. Then He can speak to you. He may remind you about something in your life that does not please Him. Or He may give you a clearer knowledge of His will for you, how you can best serve Him, to whom you can witness, or He may show you someone’s needs and how to help.

Usually, you hear God in your heart, rather than with your ears.

Which is more trustworthy?

- ☐ A dream.
- ☐ The Word of God.

Which is more important?

- ☐ The position of the body.
- ☐ A reverent heart.

PUBLIC PRAYERS ARE ORDERLY

The false prophets of Baal shouted in confusion.

(1 Kings 18:25-29)

God commands us to pray in public in an orderly way.

(1 Corinthians 14:14-17,31-33,40)

PRAYER AND MEDITATION ON THE BIBLE MAKE UP OUR CONVERSATION WITH GOD

God speaks to us through the Bible. The Bible is sufficient for all instruction. (2 Timothy 3:16-17) We can add nothing to God's Word. (Revelation 22:18-19)

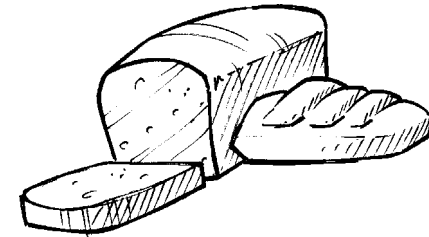
Through our prayers, God extends His kingdom and makes His will be done on earth, including the following areas:

- our own life,
- our family,
- the church and its ministry,
- the conversion of the lost,
- the healing of the sick,
- your work,
- the government.

What a tremendous responsibility prayer is, then!

3. Ask for what we need.

"Give us today our daily bread."



*“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name.
Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”*
(John 16:24)

Always pray for definite things. God will supply all our needs,
and even prosper us so that we can help others.

How can I bother God
with my needs? He is
busy with much bigger
things.

He looks after even
the flowers and the
birds. Everything you
do interests God.



Many people pray with their eyes closed, to avoid
distractions, and think only of God.

In the Bible, some people prayed bowing down, to
worship God. (Genesis 24:26)



Solomon prayed standing, when he dedicated the
temple. (1 Kings 8:22-23)



Others prayed kneeling, to humble themselves.
(Luke 22:41)



Some prayed face down, to supplicate about very
important matters. (Numbers 20:6)



God does not look at the position of our bodies,
but rather at the attitude of our hearts.

We ask the Lord to deliver us from falling into sin, and to protect us from our enemy Satan. In prayer let us put on the spiritual armor of God, before going out into our daily battle. (Ephesians 6:10-20)

6. Finish, giving God the glory.

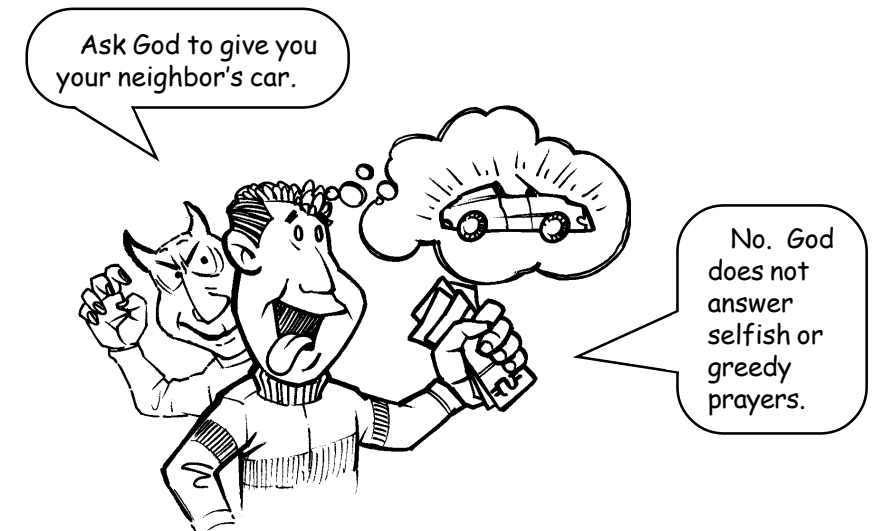
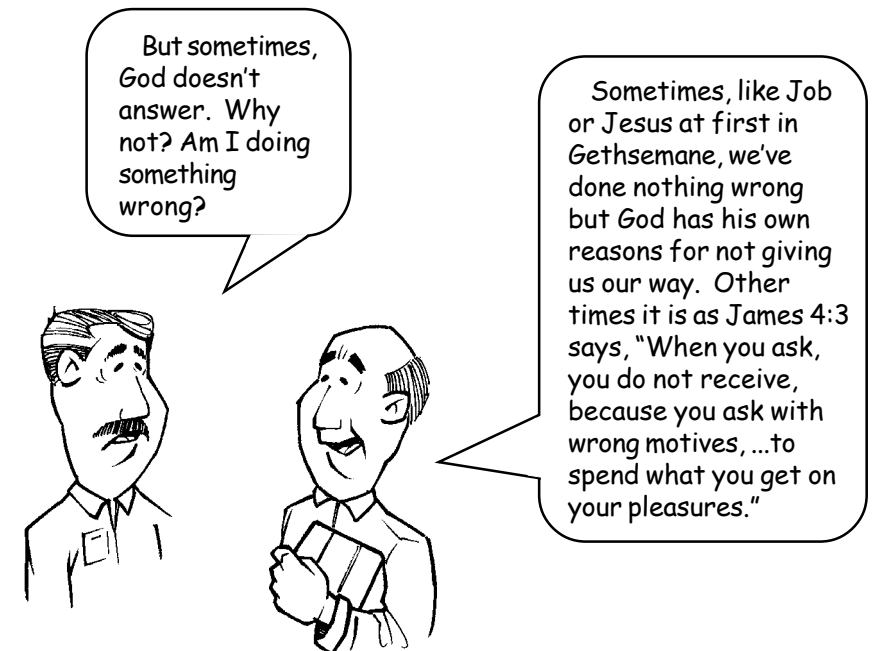
“For yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever, Amen!”

We give God the glory because the victory is His.

PRAYER MUST BE SINCERE

“Pray continually.” (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

Let us keep our hearts in a constant attitude of prayer. The position of the body can express the attitude of our hearts.



Let us ask humbly, according to God's will. Let's not order God to do things. He orders us. For example, in Gethsemane, Jesus prayed (Matthew 26:39):

Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.



Why don't we demand things from God?

4. Ask forgiveness, and forgive.

"Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives."



(1 John 1:9-10)

We not only ask forgiveness for our own sins, but also sincerely forgive those who have offended us, and we ask forgiveness for them. We sometimes need to ask God to soften our hearts, to forgive others.

5. Ask for spiritual protection.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

