



PRAYER THAT WORKS

Study 7 Prayer

Make no mistake about it, Prayer is powerful. That is because He is powerful to whom we are making request. So how do I, a mere man, pray prayers that work? This is what the disciples meant in Luke 11: 1. And Jesus' answer was straight to the point.

*"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."
(James 5: 16 NIV)*

DO NOT PRAY LIKE THIS!

The following scriptures are very specific. Read the following advice and connect each statement with the corresponding verse.

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| Do not pray in unbelief. | Matthew 6:5 |
| Do not try to impress people when speaking to God. | Mark 11:25 |
| Do not chant or repeat phrases over and over again. | Hebrews 11:6 |
| Do not enter His presence with unforgiveness in your heart. | Ecclesiastes 5:4,5 |
| Do not make promises you don't intend to keep. | Matthew 6:7 |

The way to pray effectively is summed up in the teaching Jesus gave his disciples in Matthew 6:9-13. Unfortunately we often 'parrot' this prayer in direct contradiction to how he said to do it. It can be memorised of course, but the power of the 'Lords Prayer' is not in repeating it word for word. The secret is praying according to the principles it contains.

After each subheading in this study, fill in the missing words from the 'Lords Prayer.'

PRAYER IS BASED ON RELATIONSHIP

" _____ in heaven, ..." (Matt 6:9)

The Lords Prayer is radical from the very start! Who would have the audacity to speak to a god in terms like that? Yet that is what Jesus said to say. I pray saying 'Father,' he shows in John 17:1. You may say 'Father' too. It is the privilege of those who have **relationship**.

Read John 1:12. What is our relationship to God? _____

From Galatians 4:4-7 add anything else you can find concerning this relationship.

PRAYER IS SPOKEN WITH RESPECT

" _____ be your name, ..." (Matt 6:9)

There are misunderstandings to do with how people perceive fatherhood. Some cultures fear their fathers but it is a 'fear' that is devoid of love. Other cultures love their father, but it is 'buddy-love', casual and lacking due respect. Consequently, some of God's children approach Him flippantly, but this is no way to get prayer answered. Prayer should be spoken with respect.

The book of Acts records a prayer example which it describes as a 'memorial.' It is well worth thinking about. Read Acts 10:1-7 and find the attitude this man had which got his prayers to God's attention the way it did.

PRAYER PUTS GODS KINGDOM FIRST

"Your kingdom come, _____ on earth as it is in heaven." (Matt 6:10)

The kingdom of God is both present as well as future. It is that kingdom where his will is done, and wherever there are people who do His will, there is the kingdom of God. It is an outpost, so to speak, of the kingdom which is in heaven. So when we pray, "Your kingdom come" we are saying, "Gods kingdom **already pioneered on earth** be extended." Simultaneously we are saying, "Gods kingdom **in its fullness** come", when he returns.

The kingdom is in complete submission to Him. For that reason prayer does not seek its own; it **always** puts God's kingdom first. And this kind of prayer **never fails!** Indeed, the man or woman who understands prayer in Gods will always receives his request. As 1John 5:14-15 says, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we asked of him."

PRAYER ASKS FOR EARTHLY THINGS

"Give us today _____ " (Matt 6:11)

The simple truth is that God cares about our day to day needs. Furthermore, we are entitled to pray for them. In fact, Jesus in the same message tells us that natural things are on the 'to pray list.' So ask! List some of the things from Matt 6:25-31 that God **expects** us to ask for.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

It is not wrong to ask for earthly things. The only proviso is that he wants us to put His kingdom first; that's all. Now write Matt 6:33 and learn this verse off by heart.

PRAYER MEETS OUR DEEPEST NEED

" _____ our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." (Matt 6:12)

When we find ourselves stained and our conscience in pain because of sin, our whole being cries out for cleansing and for relationship with God to be restored. This is found in prayer. David's Psalm 51 is such a case of 'deep-need' prayer. "Forgive us," we cry and God answers and forgives. But do not imagine God forgives without testing too!

"And lead us not into temptation, but _____ from the evil one." (Matt 6:13)

Temptation in this context is in the sense of 'testing' to make us strong. 'Tempt' does not mean seducing us into evil because God would not do that. Nevertheless, it is a hard fact of the Christian life that God will and does test his children. Can we bear it? Our prayer is, "do not test us to the point that we are overpowered." And here is his promise. Write 1Cor.10:13.

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