



## When God's People Pray

May 16, 2021 Message Notes

1 JOHN 5:14-15

The most difficult part of a prayer life is starting one. As we ask, we learn what it means to give voice to our faith, which God loves. It is a conversation that grows from trust and in love and builds confidence in Him. The more we do it, the closer we draw near to God and God to us.



## NOTES

“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 he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we have asked of him.”

1 JOHN 5:14-15

*“Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance. It’s laying hold of his willingness.”* – Martin Luther

“Ask...Seek...Knock.”

MATTHEW 7:7

Jesus told his disciples...they should always pray and not give up.

LUKE 18:1

*“I find no contradiction from science with my belief in the existence of a personal God who answers prayer.”* – Dr. Francis Collins

Jesus teaches us in the model prayer that we should ask God for:

- **Material Provisions:** daily bread
- **Relational Renewal:** forgive us as we forgive others
- **Moral Guidance:** lead us not into temptation
- **Spiritual Freedom:** deliver us from evil

Before we bring our requests, we need to envelop them in a decision to:

- **Know God as God:** hallowed be thy name
- **Welcome His Reign:** thy kingdom come
- **Follow His Will:** thy will be done

Prayer isn’t getting God to do things you want. He’s not a vending machine in the sky. Prayer isn’t a magic incantation that you say to bend the universe to your will.

Prayer is a conversation that grows from trust and in love and builds confidence in our Creator and Savior God.

“Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him.”

1 JOHN 3:22



**What are his commands?** To believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another.

As we ask, we learn what it means to give voice to our faith, which God loves.

“Without faith it’s impossible to please God because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

*HEBREWS 11:6*

As you draw near to God, he draws near to you. Prayer is how we do that.

**Prayer is about fellowship and connection, energizing and building confidence in your relationship with God.**

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God...”

*1 JOHN 5:14*

As you come closer to God, a deepening intimacy can start to grow as you share your awareness of need.

**You asking is about you finding your voice before God.**

Prayer isn’t about you telling God what to do or earning favors from Him by rituals. It’s a conversation involving transparency and being known.

“And if he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we have asked of him.”

*1 JOHN 5:15*

“So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy and find grace to help us when we need it most.”

*HEBREWS 4:16*

Part of the mystery we learn from Jesus is that God’s will sometimes involves drinking a cup of suffering, and why we don’t need to fear it.

Sometimes God’s will involves spiritual warfare – taking on the darkness in obedience to God.

**Through believing prayer God is developing us for our heavenly calling.**

God “*did not ordain prayer primarily as a way of getting things done. It is his way of giving the Church on-the-job training in overcoming the forces hostile to God.*” – Paul Billheimer, *Destined for the Throne*



Prayer is where we learn in actual practice how to overcome Satan and his hierarchy.

“To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my Father in His throne.”

*REVELATION 3:21*

Sometimes overcoming means praying and not giving up.

**How long should we keep on praying?** Until you get God’s answer in your heart or in your hand.

Don’t be surprised when your prayers and pursuit of God’s will is blocked, resisted or delayed. Keep on praying.

We have freedom and confidence to speak in God’s presence. So we come boldly; eager to learn God’s will and to join him in bringing it to life. As we do, God will take care of us in his will, even if we have to face suffering.

**How do we pray when we don’t know God’s will?** Ask for what you do know in light of God’s Word.

**What if we don’t know how to pray?** Use Matthew 6 as an example.

The most difficult part of a prayer life is starting, so just start – daily.

You’ve got questions in your life and the answers are waiting for you there. They won’t be found anywhere else.

God loves to listen to you and wants to hear from you.

“You will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you...”

*JEREMIAH 29:12-14*

**What’s your next step?** Seek him! Start now!

**Spend some time daily with God in prayer:**

- Think with an open mind
- Listen with an open heart
- Read with an open Bible



- Watch with a pen and paper for the surprising things God brings to mind, people you think about, promptings you feel, and spiritual nudges

This is how we hear and follow the Spirit's voice.

