

## Why do we Pray?

Do you feel lost when it comes to praying? Don't feel bad! Even Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray.

There are many good reasons to pray. Here are just a few. Luke 18:1 says that we should pray and not faint. A similar passage in Isaiah 40:31 says that those who wait upon the Lord - by praying- renew their strength. They rise up with wings as eagles. They run and are not weary. Proverbs 3:6 says that when we acknowledge God in our ways, He directs our paths. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says that when we come into the presence of the Lord, He changes us. Things that are difficult to overcome melt away. Luke 22:40 says that praying frees us from temptation. It is important to pray!



## Jesus Prayed!

The disciples of Jesus often saw Him praying. He would rise up early before dawn and talk with His Father. Because they would see Him praying and it's effectiveness, they asked Him to teach them how to pray. What He taught them is found in Matthew 6, 1-15. If possible, read this now!

Notice Jesus begins with how we should not pray, followed by instruction on how to pray. The do not's are pretty self explanatory: we should not pray to be seen, and we should not just ramble on without thinking about what we are saying.



Next, Jesus gives us the how to's. Here is what He said:

"After this manner therefore pray: Our Father in heaven, Holy is your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as

we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." ASV.

Many people, and possibly you also, know this as the Lord's prayer. They often quote this, especially in religious gatherings. But please look again at what He said! He said we are to pray "in this way," and not to "say these words." Why is this? It is because God is a person and we should not attempt to speak to Him through memorized formulas. We are to use what Jesus said as a guide and not simply repeat what He said.



## We Worship Him!

When we begin to pray, we acknowledge God for who He is, "Holy is your name!" Take time to thank Him for what He has done for you and to express your love to Him. This is really a very important and neglected part of prayer. We will learn more about worshipping God in another lesson.



Next comes the part, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done." What is especially wonderful about this, is that each one of us live in a specific place/region and have family, friends and acquaintances that are unique to us. They make up our area of influence. Our job is to pray for the people and situations where we have contact, that God would establish His Kingdom in their lives and that His will would be done in them.

Continuing on in prayer, you will be praying for physical needs, "Give us our daily bread." Note that we pray for others' needs, as well as our own.



After that, you are to pray about temptations or weaknesses you are facing. You will also want to pray and forgive others if they have hurt you.

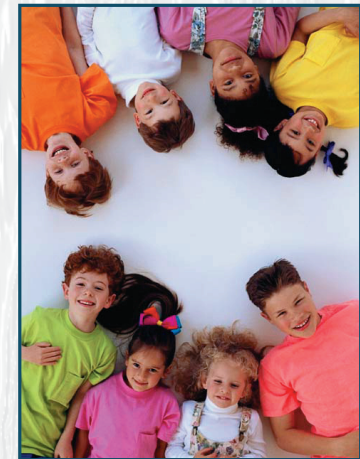
All of these areas are important. We cannot cover everything now! Instead, we will have individual lessons on each one at a later time.

But now, you should have a good idea about praying. May the Lord bless you as you continue to get to know Him and His ways!

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## How to Pray!



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