

C. Pray With a Godly Perspective and Attitude

Group Question: What things have found helpful or useful in your prayer life?

1. **Pray Purposefully**—How do you pray? Do you pray in order to “put in your time” every day, or do you pray with “the end in mind?” Do you have a reason or reasons for your prayer? What do you hope to accomplish through your prayer? Do you “run out” of things to pray about? How do you feel after you have prayed?
2. **Pray Regularly**—God, through the Apostle Paul, tells us to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thes 5:17). God, our Father, wants to hear from us often and He desires to be involved with our lives. Pray before you travel, pray about your day ahead and God’s guidance through it, pray and thank God for small interventions (and big ones) throughout the day.
3. **Several Reminders as You Pray:**
 - a. **Use a Prayer List**—Do not try to cover the entire list “every” time you pray. Rather, try to cover different portions of the list at different times of the day.
 - b. **Schedule Your Prayer**—You may not need to schedule your prayer to the minute, but by scheduling in “formal” prayer at different points of the day (e.g., when you wake up and perhaps after you have had your coffee or tea, shortly before or after lunch, in the evening, prior to bed), you will be sure to make it happen. If you “wait” for free time in the day to pray, it will very rarely occur.
 - c. **Focus Your Prayer Periods**—Perhaps your morning prayer will focus on thanking God for His blessings and on asking for His protection throughout the day. Your afternoon prayer could focus on specific situations in your life or the lives of others—asking God for guidance and His intervention. Your evening prayer could reflect thankfully on the day, continuing to thank God for His blessings, and also asking Him to bless the Work, protect the brethren, additionally taking time to reflect on your day and repent of mistakes you have made.
 - d. **Do Regular Bible Study**—Through Bible study, we can learn better “how” to pray and “what” to pray about. King David’s examples in the Psalms as well as Christ’s examples in the Gospels are both excellent tools to use.
 - e. **Avoid Mindless Repetitions:** (Matt 6:7) If our heart is *not* in our prayer, it is easy to fall into the trap of thoughtless or mindless recitation. When we focus, wanting to really converse with our Father in heaven, our prayers should be spontaneous and from the heart, not a memorized incantation. Focusing our prayer periods on different topics may help avoid repetitious prayers.
4. **Essential Prayer Topics:**
 - a. **Pray for Others:** This is an important action and tremendous tool to help godly leaders be more effective. Praying for others will also help us lead God’s people, even when some are irritating or overbearing. Paul and his traveling companions gave us the example of praying for God’s people always (Col 1:3).
 - b. **Forgiveness:** Forgiveness is a gift that God gives to us, but also a gift that He requires us to give to others. Christ reminded His disciples that if they did not forgive others, neither would they be forgiven (Matt 18:35). Sometimes it is difficult to forgive and in those cases we must ask God to help us forgive. Directly tied with our being forgiven by God is *repentance*. In order for God to forgive us for our daily sins, we must not only ASK, but we must also repent, show Him that we are truly sorry, and resolve with His help, to not do it again.
 - c. **God’s Will Be Done:** Christ clearly demonstrated that we are to pray for God’s will to be done in our lives and the lives of others (Matt 6:10; Luke 22:42). Our prayers should *not* be focused on getting our will heard, but on asking God to show us His will, and help us to earnestly desire His will in our lives.
 - d. **Becoming Like God:** Our prayer should regularly focus on asking God to fashion and mold us into His image. To make our mind into His, to help us think like He thinks and act like He acts. Ultimately we are to strive for perfection as God is perfect (Matt 5:48) and we are to put our trust in God to help us do this. In this vein, we should be praying for more of