

Prayer - God's Key To a Productive Life

Our prayers change circumstances, meet needs, and ultimately produce eternal results for the kingdom of God. The Bible tells us that we are to pray without ceasing. As believers, the most effective and powerful tool we have is prayer, and we should use it to get victory before the trials and temptations come. Pray for yourself. Pray for your family. Pray for your friends, co-workers, and your neighbors. Most importantly, always remember to pray for the Lord's work—the salvation of souls and the edification of the saints—all for the glory of the Lord.

More can be accomplished in prayer during the first hours of the morning, when we are free from distractions and able to concentrate upon God, than at any other time during the day. Our thoughts are not cluttered or preoccupied by the day's stresses, and at this time, we can attentively wait and listen for the Lord's gentle nudging of who and what to pray for. When the early hours are spent in prayer, we can establish an eternal focus and perspective on life. Although morning is a desired time to pray, many stories have been told of people sensing a burden and praying for someone at an unusual time; only to learn later that a particular need was great at the exact time they sensed the burden.

Prayer is a privilege: When we share our burdens and concerns with others, God works in their lives as well as ours. We should view prayer as a tremendous honor and responsibility. When we know another person is praying, we feel strengthened and encouraged. In turn, we receive a blessing when we pray for others.

Prayer should be centered on God: When you pray, focus on God: His identity and goodness. Ask Him to bring a fresh understanding of His sovereignty to your heart. When you allow Him to reveal His greatness and love to you, you are filled with a deeper understanding of His mercy and peace. Prayer and meditation on God's Word remind you of your powerful and loving heavenly Father who is eternally interested in your life.

*Our Father who art in heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven*

*Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
Forever and ever. Amen*

Prayer and faith work together: We must believe that God is who He says He is and that He loves us, has redeemed us, and hears every prayer we say or even whisper. *Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.* (Mark 11)

Faith strengthens prayer: When we pray our faith thrives, becoming stronger and more certain. Dr. Charles Stanley says, "The journey of faith is not always safe; growing in the Lord involves seasons of pain, testing, and uncertainty . . . That is what faith is about—seeing Him moving and working behind everything." If we seek God only when life is in chaos, our faith will be weak, our persistence will be slack, and our endurance will waver. If we learn to seek God when there is no crisis, we won't be thrown off balance when problems do occur.

How we react to situations and events shows the source of our strength. Oswald Chambers says "There are times when there is no storm or crisis in our lives, and we do all that is humanly possible. But it is when a crisis arises that we instantly reveal upon whom we rely." Prayer is tapping into the inexhaustible resource of your loving heavenly Father who is interested in your problems or the problems of those about whom you care. God is greater than any problem. He wants you to seek Him in prayer. He desires for you to live victoriously, regardless of your circumstances. Don't wait until you are facing adversity to seek God in prayer. Learn how to pray in good times and in difficult times. Be relentless in praying.

Questions For Meditation and Discussion

1. When and how do I pray?
2. What ways does God want to help me make more of my life of prayer with Him?
3. What kind of praying might I include that I haven't been in a habit of doing recently?
4. How does prayer change lives? My own and others?