

PRAYER

Prayer is a wonderful blessing for the child of God. In Daniel 6:4-11, Daniel prays in spite of the king's prohibition of prayer. Prayer is a powerful part of our lives. The words prayer, prayers, praying, and pray are found 451 times in the Bible—Prayer is important. Therefore, we will observe some things concerning this great privilege.

1. **What is prayer?** Prayer means to petition, request, or entreat. It is the way in which we communicate with God (Rom. 10:1). Prayer involves praise (Matt. 6:9), thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6), confession (1 John 1:9), and petitions (Phil. 4:6).

2. **Why should we pray?** Prayer is a direct command (1 Thes. 5:17). It is a means of obtaining blessings (James 4:2). Prayer is a powerful tool in the hand of the faithful (Acts 4:32).

3. **When should we pray?** Petitions should be as often as our needs and thanksgivings as often as our blessings. (Psa. 55:17).

4. **For what should we pray?** We should pray for strength in temptations (Matt. 26:41), for wisdom (James 1:5-7), for unity (John 17:20-21), for forgiveness (Matt. 6:12), for the sick (2 Sam. 12:16), and for people in general (1 Tim. 2:1).

5. **What hinders our prayers?** Prayers are hindered by allowing sin to remain in our lives (Isa. 59:1-2), by praying selfishly (James 4:3), and by doubting (James 1:5-8).

6. **Who can pray?** The obedient (1 John 3:22), the submissive (1 John 5:14), and the faithful (John 15:7). Please notice that the sinner is not heard. One who continues in sin is not heard (1 Pet. 3:12; John 9:31; Psa. 66:18; Isa. 59:1-2).

7. **How should we pray?** It really does matter how we pray. We must pray fervently (James 5:16), and we must pray believing (Mark 11:24). Our prayers are to be addressed to the Father, and not to Jesus (John 16:23).

8. **God really does answer prayers.** The Bible clearly teaches that God hears and answers our prayers and receives the thanksgiving we offer before Him (Isa. 65:24; Psa. 118:5; 120:1; Heb. 4:16; 1 Pet. 3:12; Matt. 7:7-11).

Prayer is the faithful child of God's way of communicating with Him. It can bring about changes in our lives and in the lives of others as God works in the realm of His providence. May we ever have the attitude found in Luke 11:1; "one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray."

- Toney L. Smith, *Beacon*, Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL -

Prayer - G. K. Wallace (deceased)

Jesus told us *what* to say *when* we pray. When you pray, you should pray to "Our Father who art in heaven." (Matt. 6:7-9). Our prayers are to be addressed to God and not to man. Prayer to God is sacred, "Hallowed be thy name." Jesus, our example, showed us *when* to pray. He prayed before He made a decision (Luke 6:12-13). Before selecting His apostles He spent all night in prayer (Luke 6:12). He prayed for the sorrowing souls of Mary and Martha at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:32-43). He prayed for Peter when Satan had asked for him. Jesus said, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired to have you. But I have prayed that thy faith fail not." (Luke 22:31-32). Jesus prayed in His own sorrow. He cried out in prayer, "Father the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee." (John 17:1) In the garden, He prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me" (Matt. 26:39). Jesus prayed for those who abused Him. He said, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). As we often sing, "pray when in sorrow, pray when in trouble, pray all the time." - *Beacon*, Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL -

Giving of thanks is a course from which we never graduate.

News & Notes

WV CHRISTIAN RENEWALS OR NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS: Sign up **TODAY** on the sheet on the desk in the foyer. Give your money to one of the Elders or to Rico. The group rate: \$8 per year for 12 issues.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Each Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

PANTRY: Stuffing.

SICK & SHUT-IN: At Home: Nikki Beagle (covid), Debbie Waite, Paula Clutter, Carolyn Pallard, Brodi Barile, Jim Hadley, Linda Parkes, Mike West, Barbara DeLong, Claudette Miller, Cheryl Renfro Walker. **Fox, Pepperberry Suites, Chester:** David McCoy. **Weston, WV:** Rick Beck.

Thanksgiving



In his classic book, *Robinson Crusoe*, the author, Daniel Defoe, writes how Crusoe, when ship-wrecked on a forsaken island, was deprived of nearly everything that people consider vital for happiness. After considering his safe arrival on the island, Crusoe says, "I sat down to my meat with thankfulness, and admired the hand of God's providence which had thus spread my table in the wilderness. I learned to look more on the bright side of my condition, and less upon the dark side, and to consider what I had rather than what I wanted. And this at times gave me such secret comforts that I cannot express them . . . All our discontents about what we want appeared to me to spring from the want of thankfulness for what we have."

The apostle Paul said it better, and long before Crusoe, when he wrote: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content" (Philippians 4:11). Matthew Henry once wrote of how he had been robbed. In his diary he stated: "let me thankful first because I was never robbed before; second, although they took my purse they did not take my life; third, because although they took my all, it wasn't much; fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed." When we look at what we want, and compare it with what we have, most of us will be ungrateful. When we think of what we deserve, then of what we have, we will thank God.

~ Charles C. Pugh III ~

