

# Prayer & Faith

Growing in prayer and trust in God

## The Nature and Privilege of Prayer

### **Hebrews 4:16**

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

### **1 John 5:14-15**

[14] And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: [15] And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

### **Philippians 4:6**

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

### **Jeremiah 33:3**

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Prayer constitutes the believer's divinely granted access to the throne of grace—an incomprehensible privilege purchased by Christ's blood. Through His mediation, we may come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Prayer is not merely a religious exercise but vital communion with the Almighty, the breath of the spiritual life, the Christian's native air. God invites us to call unto Him, promising that He will answer and show us great and mighty things which we know not.

Prayer acknowledges our dependence, expresses our faith, and maintains our fellowship with the Father.

## The Model Prayer—Our Father

### **Matthew 6:9-13**

[9] After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. [10] Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. [11] Give us this day our daily bread. [12] And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. [13] And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

### **Luke 11:2-4**

[2] And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. [3] Give us day by day our daily bread. [4] And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

### **Matthew 6:5-8**

[5] And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. [6] But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. [7] But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. [8] Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

### **John 17:1-26**

[1] These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: [2] As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. [3] And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. [4] I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. [5] And now, O

Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. [6] I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. [7] Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. [8] For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. [9] I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. [10] And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. [11] And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. [12] While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. [13] And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. [14] I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. [15] I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. [16] They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. [17] Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. [18] As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. [19] And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. [20] Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; [21] That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. [22] And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: [23] I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. [24] Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. [25] O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. [26] And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, He gave them a pattern encompassing all essential elements of prayer. 'Our Father which art in heaven'—prayer begins with acknowledging God's character and our relationship to Him as beloved children addressing their perfect Father.

'Hallowed be thy name'—worship and adoration come first, honoring God's holy nature and attributes. 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done'—submission to God's sovereignty and desire for His purposes to prevail.

'Give us this day our daily bread'—petition for temporal needs, trusting the Father's provision. 'Forgive us our debts'—confession of sin and request for mercy.

'As we forgive our debtors'—recognition that receiving forgiveness obligates extending forgiveness. 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil'—supplication for spiritual protection and deliverance.

This prayer teaches structure, priorities, and proper attitudes in approaching God.

## Elements of Effective Prayer

### **Psalm 95:2**

(See Psalm 95:2)

### **1 John 1:9**

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:18**

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

### **1 Timothy 2:1**

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

Complete prayer incorporates multiple elements working together. First, adoration—entering His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise, magnifying His attributes and worshiping His person.

Second, confession—acknowledging our sins specifically and honestly, for if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Third, thanksgiving—giving thanks always for all things unto God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, expressing gratitude for answered prayer, spiritual blessings, and divine providence.

Fourth, supplication—making specific requests for ourselves and interceding for others. I exhort therefore, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.

These elements need not follow rigid order but should characterize our prayer life comprehensively. Prayer that focuses solely on petition without worship, confession, or thanksgiving remains immature and self-centered.

## Praying in Faith and According to God's Will

### **James 1:6-7**

[6] But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. [7] For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

### **Mark 11:24**

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

### **1 John 5:14**

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

### **Matthew 21:22**

And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Effective prayer requires faith in God's character, promises, and power. Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

Let not that man think he shall receive anything of the Lord. Jesus taught, 'What

things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.' Yet faith does not presume upon God or demand He fulfill our wishes—rather, it trusts His wisdom and submits to His sovereign will.

This is the confidence we have, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. Sometimes God's will is explicitly revealed in Scripture; other times we must pray in submission, saying with Christ, 'Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.' Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

Faith trusts God to answer in His perfect time and way.

## Persistent and Fervent Prayer

### **Luke 18:1-8**

[1] And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; [2] Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: [3] And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. [4] And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; [5] Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. [6] And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. [7] And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? [8] I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

### **1 Thessalonians 5:17**

Pray without ceasing.

### **James 5:16**

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

### **Colossians 4:2**

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

Scripture repeatedly commands persistent, unceasing prayer. Jesus taught a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint, illustrating through the

persistent widow that continued supplication demonstrates faith and pleases God.

Pray without ceasing—maintain an attitude of prayerfulness throughout daily life, with frequent resort to actual prayer. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Elijah prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not for three years and six months; he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.

Persistence in prayer does not manipulate God but demonstrates earnestness, builds faith, deepens desire, and proves sincerity. God sometimes delays answers to test faith, develop patience, prepare us for the blessing, or for reasons known only to Him.

Persistent prayer honors God and positions us to receive His answers in His perfect timing.

## The Nature of Biblical Faith

### **Hebrews 11:1**

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

### **Hebrews 11:6**

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

### **Romans 10:17**

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

### **2 Corinthians 5:7**

(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen—it gives present reality to future promises and provides conviction concerning invisible spiritual truths. Without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Biblical faith is not blind optimism, wishful thinking, or irrational credulity. Rather, it is confident trust in God's revealed truth, resting upon His character and promises.

Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God—it is grounded in divine revelation, not human speculation. We walk by faith, not by sight, trusting God's word above our perceptions and feelings.

Faith believes God's testimony concerning His Son, trusts His promises despite contrary circumstances, and obeys His commands even when the outcome remains uncertain. It is both a gift from God and a responsibility to exercise and strengthen.

## Faith Demonstrated Through Obedience

### **James 2:17-26**

[17] Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. [18] Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. [19] Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. [20] But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? [21] Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? [22] Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? [23] And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. [24] Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. [25] Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? [26] For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

### **Hebrews 11:7-8**

[7] By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. [8] By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

### **Genesis 22:1-18**



[1] And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. [2] And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. [3] And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. [4] Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. [5] And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. [6] And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. [7] And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? [8] And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. [9] And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. [10] And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. [11] And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. [12] And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. [13] And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. [14] And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen. [15] And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, [16] And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: [17] That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; [18] And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

## **1 John 5:3-4**

[3] For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. [4] For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Genuine faith invariably produces corresponding action—faith without works is dead, being alone. James declared, 'Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.' Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness when he offered Isaac, his obedience demonstrating his faith.

Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Faith trusts God's promises sufficiently to act upon them, obeys His commands despite difficulty, and perseveres through trials.

Works do not produce faith but provide evidence of its genuineness—true faith works by love and manifests through obedient surrender.

## Growing and Strengthening Faith

### **Romans 10:17**

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

### **Jude 1:20**

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

### **2 Thessalonians 1:3**

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

### **Luke 17:5**

And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

Faith is not static but grows through spiritual nourishment and exercise. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God—regular, attentive study of Scripture strengthens faith by revealing God's character, promises, and faithfulness.

Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost—prayer, worship, and Spirit-dependence develop faith. The Thessalonians' faith grew exceedingly through persecution and tribulation, proving that trials test and strengthen genuine faith.

The disciples prayed, 'Lord, increase our faith,' recognizing their need for greater trust. Faith grows through meditating on God's past faithfulness, rehearsing His mighty works, and recounting answered prayers.

It increases through fellowship with mature believers whose faith inspires imitation. It strengthens through practical exercise—stepping out in obedience despite fear, trusting God in difficult circumstances, and proving His faithfulness experientially.

Like a muscle that develops through use, faith grows through being exercised in dependence upon God.

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