

“A Better Way 5” The Right Way and Wrong Way to Pray

I. The Right Way to Pray

PRINCIPLE 1: Prayer is All about Our Heart, Relating and Interacting with God!

1 Samuel 16:7 (NIV) ... **The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”**

A. Prayer is Heartfelt, Meaningful Communication with God

PRINCIPLE 2: Prayer is a Heartfelt Expression of Conversation with God.

James 5:16 (AMP) **The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer** of a righteous person makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working]

DEFINE: Conversational Prayer - is Centered around Spending Time with God, Fellowshiping and Cultivating a Personal, Life-Giving Relationship with God.

1. Focus on God (Focus on God’s Presence, Love, Goodness, Faithfulness and Mercy!)

Colossians 3:2 (NKJV) **Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.**

2. Benefits of Conversational Prayer

Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV) **You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.**

DEFINE: Prayer - Heartfelt Conversational Prayer where We Talk and Listen to God Cultivating a Life-Giving Relationship with Him.

II. The Wrong Way to Pray

A. The Wrong Types of Prayer

PRINCIPLE 3: Prayer is Not a Time to Inform God of how Bad Things Really Are and is Not an Opportunity to Unload, Gripe and Complain to Him about Your Problems, Informing Him on How Bad Your Situation Is!

1. Traditional Prayer

Mark 7:13 (NKJV) **making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.”**

PRINCIPLE 4: Prayer is not Following Prescribed Formalities of Ceremonial Rituals and Customs that Satisfy Religious Obligations and Sooth Your Conscience.

2. Ritualized Prayer

Matthew 6:5 (NIV) **“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others.** Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

PRINCIPLE 5: The Religious System of Jesus’ Day Emphasized Prayer, but it was not True Communion with God; their Prayer was Just a Monologue that was a Religious Ritual that Made them Appear Spiritual.

Matthew 6:2 (NIV) **“So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others.** Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

DEFINE: Hypocrite - Standing Behind a Mask where we Change Our Whole Personality, pretending to be Someone that We Really are Not!

3. Calisthenics Prayer

Matthew 6:7 (NIV) **And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.**

PRINCIPLE 6: Using Empty Repetition or Spending Long Prolonged, Grueling Periods of Time in Prayer does not Make You More Spiritual or Qualified to Receive Special Advantages from God.

B. Misconceptions about Prayer

1. Prayer Should Only be Done in Secret

Matthew 6:6 (NIV) **But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.**

There are Many Instances where Jesus Prayed in Public

a. Jesus Prayed in Public

John 12:28–29 (NKJV)²⁸ **Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, saying, “I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.”**²⁹ Therefore the people who stood by and heard *it* said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

Luke 23:34 (NKJV) Then Jesus said, **“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.”** And they divided His garments and cast lots.

2. Prayer Should be a Certain Amount of Time Everyday

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NKJV) **pray without ceasing.**

PRINCIPLE 7: If Our Relationship with God can Be Reduced to Only a Certain amount of Time a Day, it is not Much of a Relationship; Prayer should be Constant because God is with Us 24/7.

Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV) **“I will never leave you nor forsake you.”**

3. Prayer Should be Lengthy and Drawn Out

a. Jesus’ Examples of Prayer

There are Two separate Instances where Jesus Prayed Prolonged Prayers: when He chose His Disciples and in the Garden of Gethsemane, but Most of His Prayers were Short and to the Point!

1. Calming the Storm

Mark 4:39 (NKJV) Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, **“Peace, be still!”** And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

2. Raising Lazarus

John 11:41–43 (NKJV) ⁴¹ Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up *His* eyes and said, “**Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.** ⁴² **And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said *this*, that they may believe that You sent Me.**” ⁴³ **Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!”**

PRINCIPLE 8: The Length of Our Prayer is Not Important, but the Content is!

Ask and It Will Be Given

Luke 11:9-10 (NKJV) ⁹ “So I say to you, **ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.** ¹⁰ For **everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.**

PRINCIPLE: Answered Prayer Depends not Only God Providing Our Needs, but also Us Learning how to Receive what God has Already Appropriated.

A. Give and it Will Be Given

Luke 6:38 (KJV) Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, **shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use it shall be measured to you again.**

B. Believe When You Pray

Mark 11:24 (NKJV) Therefore I say to you, **whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.**

PRINCIPLE: The Believing Part of Prayer does not Happen When We See the Answer to Our Prayer; We must Believe that God has already Appropriated the Promise and it is Ours before We See it Come to Pass in the Physical World!

C. Praying for Finances

God does not have Money, but He Empowers Us to Get Wealth

Deuteronomy 8:18 (NKJV) “And you shall remember the LORD your God, **for it is He who gives you power to get wealth,** that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as *it is* this day.