

HOW TO PRAY

INSIDE:

- How to Pray
- How to Talk to God
- The Lord's Prayer
- Does God Answer Prayers Today?

Article Reprint Series From **LifeHopeandTruth.com**



HOW TO PRAY

It is universally understood that Christians should pray. But what should we say to God? Do we know how to pray? How does God want us to pray?

When we wonder about prayer, it should be reassuring to know that even a disciple of Jesus asked Him for instructions about *how to pray.*

"Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord,teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples'" (Luke 11:1).

Simply stated, prayer is our means of communicating with God. As with any personal relationship, interaction with God matures as we spend more time with Him.

As the Lord's disciple indicated, prayer is something that does not come naturally to us—it is something that needs to be taught. The inspired Word of God provides the answers to some frequently asked questions about how to pray.

TO WHOM SHOULD WE PRAY?

Elijah and others in the Old Testament prayed to God. The apostle Paul made references to praying to God in both of the epistles he wrote to the Christians living in the pagan city of Corinth (1 Corinthians 11:13 and 2 Corinthians 13:7).

Jesus taught His disciples to pray to "our Father" (Matthew 6:6). Jesus Himself told the gang that arrested Him in the Garden of Gethsemane that He could pray to His Father right then and be rescued (Matthew 26:53).

After His resurrection, Jesus told Mary Magdalene not to cling to Him because He had not yet ascended to heaven. He told her to tell the others that He was ascending to "My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God" (John 20:17).

WHEN SHOULD WE PRAY?

In Psalm 55:17 King David said he would pray in the "evening and morning and at noon." Daniel also prayed three times a day (Daniel 6:10, 13).

There are several references to praying in the middle of the afternoon—"at the ninth hour." The point is that there is no wrong time for prayer, and that we should make the time regularly. Paul even said to pray "without ceasing"—meaning that prayer should be a regular and consistent part of our daily lives and not something we resort to only at difficult times (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

HOW LONG SHOULD OUR PRAYERS BE?

When Jesus selected His disciples, He spent the entire night in praying.

"Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles" (Luke 6:12-13).

However, that was a special occasion. Jesus selected the 12 apostles and warned them not to pray like the hypocrites, heathen or scribes.

"And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do" (Matthew 6:5-7).

"Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation" (Mark 12:38-40).

The 18th chapter of 1 Kings relates the confrontation between Elijah and 450 prophets of Baal. After they had prepared their offering, the prophets of Baal prayed to their god all day long, from morning until evening. They shouted and cut themselves trying to obtain an answer from Baal.

Finally Elijah spoke these few words: "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again" (1 Kings 18:36-37). Those words were all that were necessary for God to answer and reveal Himself powerfully to everyone present.

SHOULD OUR PRAYERS BE PUBLIC OR PRIVATE?

This depends on the circumstance. There are times, of course, when praying in public is appropriate, such as at a church service, wedding or a funeral. Jesus was often alone when He prayed (Matthew 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 4:42).

In the Sermon on the Mount, recorded in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7, Jesus instructs us to go into a "secret place" when we pray: "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly" (Matthew 6:6).

WHAT OR WHOM SHOULD WE PRAY FOR?

Jesus said we should ask our Father for His Kingdom to come and for His will to be done—which includes praying for the work of His Church to be done. We are also told to ask for our daily needs, for forgiveness and for deliverance from "the evil one" (Satan) (Matthew 6:9-13).

He also told us to pray for those who spitefully use us and persecute us (Matthew 5:44).

In his epistle, James wrote that we should pray for one another (James 5:16). Paul expands that to include praying for all people: "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence" (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

IS THERE A PRESCRIBED POSTURE TO ASSUME IN PRAYER?

The Bible gives examples of people praying while standing, kneeling, prostrating themselves on the ground and sitting.

King Solomon stood as he prayed as recorded in 1 Kings 8:22, but he also prayed when he was kneeling before the altar (1 Kings 8:54). Jesus Christ, the prophet Daniel, Stephen the martyr, the apostle Peter and the apostle Paul also knelt while praying (Luke 22:41; Daniel 6:10; Acts 7:60; Acts 9:40; Acts 20:36; Acts 21:5). Kneeling is a sign of submission to God, and Romans 14:11 says, "Every knee shall bow to Me."

Others such as Abram, Moses, Aaron and King David prostrated themselves in prayer, but David also sat as he prayed (2 Samuel 7:18).

The apostle Paul wrote to the young evangelist, Timothy, "I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1 Timothy 2:8). King David exhorted the people to lift up their hands in the sanctuary (Psalm 134:2).

It seems there are various respectful ways to approach God, depending on the circumstances, and you do not have to assume a particular position in order for you to be heard.

From these scriptures, we see that God and Jesus want us to pray, and they have not left us ignorant about how to pray. It doesn't matter as much when we pray or how long or even the position we're in as we pray. What God desires is that we approach Him regularly with reverence and with humility.



HOW TO TALK TO GOD

God used to speak directly with human beings. Is it possible for us to talk with Him today? What does the Bible say about how to talk to God?

The thought of talking with God can be intimidating. Many ask themselves:

- How can *I* possibly talk with *God?*
- Does He know who I am?
- What do I say to Him?
- Would He even bother to listen to me?
- How do I know He hears me?
- Is there *anything* in my life He has any interest in?
- Does He even want me to bother Him?

Why do we harbor such thoughts? The Bible reveals that God wants us to talk with Him and have a personal relationship with Him. But how do we do that?

Communication with God is called *prayer.* For generations, people have wondered how to pray. Jesus' disciples even asked Him to teach them how to pray; and in answer, Jesus gave an outline for prayer in Luke 11:1-4 (amplified in Matthew 6:5-13).

Many mistakenly refer to this section of Scripture as "the Lord's Prayer," but close examination will show Jesus was not praying when He gave the answer to the request from one of His disciples. He was giving them sort of an outline to follow.

TALKING WITH GOD AS A FRIEND

When we converse with acquaintances or family members, we generally follow a basic format. After greeting them, we inquire about their health or other subjects to indicate our genuine interest in their well-being. There's give-and-take as the conversation proceeds. And that's basically what God wants us to do when we pray—when we talk to Him.

We don't say exactly the same thing every time we speak with someone, do we? God doesn't want that either. That's why Jesus warned us not to use *vain repetition* when we talk with God (Matthew 6:7).

Kneeling in prayer is the posture usually assumed by God's servants when they were setting aside the time to pray (1 Kings 8:54; Daniel 6:10; Luke 22:41; Acts 9:40; 20:36; 21:5).

However, do you ever stand while you're talking with a friend? You can do that when you talk with God (Luke 18:10-13). Perhaps you sit in a chair when you chat with your buddy. King David sat when he prayed to God (2 Samuel 7:18). Clearly when the need to pray and seek God's help arises, it may not always be possible to kneel and pray. At such times the posture is not what is important. God is interested in your attitude when you talk with

Him. But, when we dedicate time for prayer in the quiet of our homes, the humble, respectful posture of kneeling is most appropriate for those who are able.

DEEPENING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THROUGH PRAYER

Haven't we found it much easier to talk with someone as our relationship with him or her grows? The first thing we need to do is get to know God. He reveals Himself to us through His Word.

Satan, the great deceiver, would like us to think that our Creator is a harsh, stern, impersonal Being who is only to be obeyed and feared, and if we fall short of His expectations, He's just waiting to zap us into oblivion. Nothing could be further from the truth!

God knows we're not perfect, that we experience emotional ups and downs as we face the trials and tribulations of everyday life.

Our first conversations with a new friend may at times be stilted; neither of us may know exactly what we should say next.

As we begin a relationship with our Heavenly Father, we may feel the same way. Have no fear. God knows we are learning to talk with Him. He will listen to our words and our thoughts, no matter how halting or unsure we are in expressing our needs for others and ourselves.

We need to learn to talk to God the way we would talk to a loving, caring Father, for this is what He is (John 16:23-27).

PRAYER IS PERSONAL, NOT A SHOW

When we decide to talk with God, we should find a quiet spot. Jesus instructed His followers to go into a room and shut the door to enjoy privacy in communication with God—our communication is not for show, after all (Matthew 6:6). Make sure all distractions like radios or televisions are turned off.

At first we may feel embarrassed to kneel to pray. That's okay. We just need to realize that our Father wants to hear from His children. We do not need to be embarrassed in any way when we come to Him in prayer.

Some people try to set aside a regular time of the day to pray. Both King David and the prophet Daniel found time to pray three times a day (Psalm 55:17; Daniel 6:10). We can be very thankful that we can go to God at any time—we don't have to have an appointment!

Then all we have to do is start talking. Is that *all* there is to how to talk to God? In a sense, that's it.

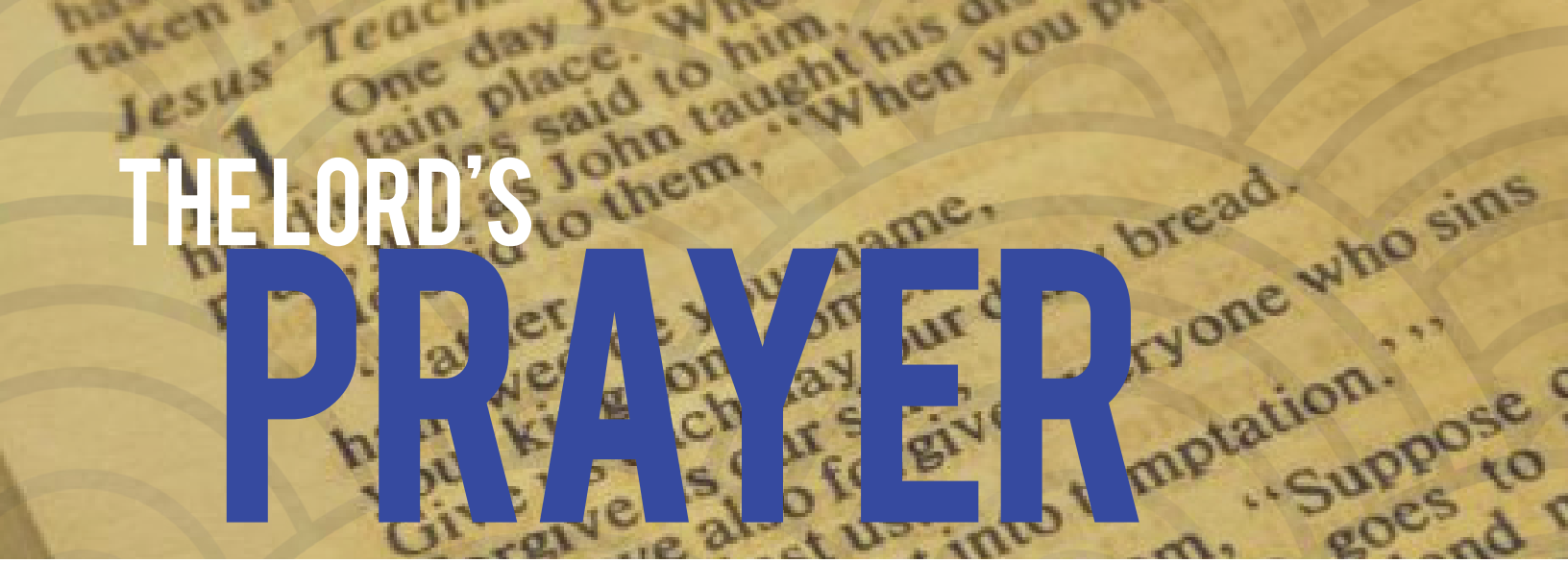
LISTENING TO GOD

We've all been engaged in a conversation with someone who wanted to do all the talking, haven't we? While God wants to hear what we have to say, He also wants us to listen to Him. God spoke directly to Adam, Noah, Moses and others in the Old Testament. He sent angelic messengers to others, and the words that were delivered to the prophets have been preserved for us in the Bible. Those who were with Jesus during His ministry on the earth also recorded His words for us.

How can we know what He wants us to hear today? The epistle to the Hebrews tells us that God, "who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son" (Hebrews 1:1-2). We have His recorded words to read and study.

After you pray, look for answers to your questions through Bible study.

Knowing how to talk to God is really that simple. For more about prayer, see the article "How to Pray."



THE LORD'S PRAYER

Many people memorize and routinely recite what is commonly called the Lord's Prayer. Is this what Jesus Christ wanted His disciples, and us, to do?

The disciples of Jesus Christ were familiar with the concept of praying, but they still asked Jesus to *teach* them to pray.

"Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples'" (Luke 11:1).

The attitude of the disciples is certainly commendable; they knew they *should* pray and really wanted to do it the right way.

OUR CHRISTIAN DUTY

We know that Jesus prayed regularly, and He expects us to pray daily as well. During His Sermon on the Mount, He said, "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

"And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matthew 6:5-8).

JESUS GAVE AN EXAMPLE

"In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen" (Matthew 6:9-13).

We should notice Jesus did not say, "Repeat these words over and over." He specifically told them—and us—not to do so! Notice His words quoted above: "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words" (Matthew 6:7).

What Matthew recorded for us should be considered a *model* prayer or an *outline* of how to pray to God. Let's look at it phrase by phrase.

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

Although the Bible mentions many instances where Jesus was praying, only a few scriptures give us the words He used in specific prayers.

Jesus set us the example. Look at the beginning of the following prayers:

- Matthew 11:25: "At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I thank You, Father, Lord of

heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.'"

- John 11:41: "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.'"
- John 12:27-28: "'Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? "Father, save Me from this hour"? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.' Then a voice came from heaven, saying, 'I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.'"
- John 17:1: "Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.'"
- Matthew 26:39: "He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.'"
- Luke 23:34: "Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.' And they divided His garments and cast lots."
- Luke 23:46: "And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, 'Father, "into Your hands I commit My spirit."' Having said this, He breathed His last."

Notice that Jesus begins by addressing His Father in heaven. When we begin our personal prayers in like manner, we also recognize the deep relationship God desires to have with us—those who are called and who respond to God's calling can be, literally, children of God.

HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

To *hallow* God's name means to honor it, to consider it sacred, to hold it in the highest regard and with very deep respect. Many of the Psalms show how to praise and honor our great God.

YOUR KINGDOM COME

We have the promise that God's Kingdom will soon be established on the earth and that it will be ever expanding. As we see all the ills of this world, the debilitating diseases, upset weather, wars and political unrest all over the globe, we realize that only the Kingdom of God can give this world the true peace and security we yearn for.

YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

Jesus said, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

We should study to learn what God's will is and then strive to bring our own will into harmony with His. Then we can incorporate those concerns into our daily prayers.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

Not only does this remind us that we need to ask for and thank God for food and other physical things on a regular basis, but it can also include praying for God's help to feast on His Word on a daily basis. God wants us to realize that Bible study helps us get to know Him and that the spiritual food He gives us is paramount.

AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS

What debts do we owe? We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We all sin daily, and we daily need to seek forgiveness.

If we don't forgive and forget the sins that we think others have committed against us, we have no chance at being forgiven ourselves. Jesus Christ said, "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:14-15).

AND DO NOT LEAD US INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE

Satan the devil is the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10) and the evil one. He is very clever, abounds in subtlety and hates those who love God. He will never give up in his vicious attempts to separate us from our Heavenly Father through temptation and sin.

But the all-powerful God can deliver us if we seek His help and draw close to Him (James 4:7-8).

FOR YOURS IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER

After His resurrection, Jesus spoke with His disciples for 40 days. They asked Him during that time if He was going to "restore the Kingdom" then (Acts 1:6).

One thing Jesus will do upon His return to the earth is to establish the Kingdom to God, and *all* the other kingdoms will be no more (1 Corinthians 15:24). What a glorious event that will be.

AMEN

The Gospels, almost all of the epistles (James and 3 John are the exceptions) and the book of Revelation all close with "Amen."

This word is also one of the names referring to Jesus. "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God'" (Revelation 3:14). Saying "Amen" also means that we certify that what went before is true.

Jesus indicated in Matthew 6 that we should begin our prayers by addressing our Heavenly Father and close them with "Amen." We also have the incredible privilege to add, "In Jesus' name" before we close (John 14:13-14).

PRAY YOUR OWN WORDS!

The above amplification of the phrases that Jesus spoke to His disciples is definitely not meant to be our exact script as we offer our daily prayers.

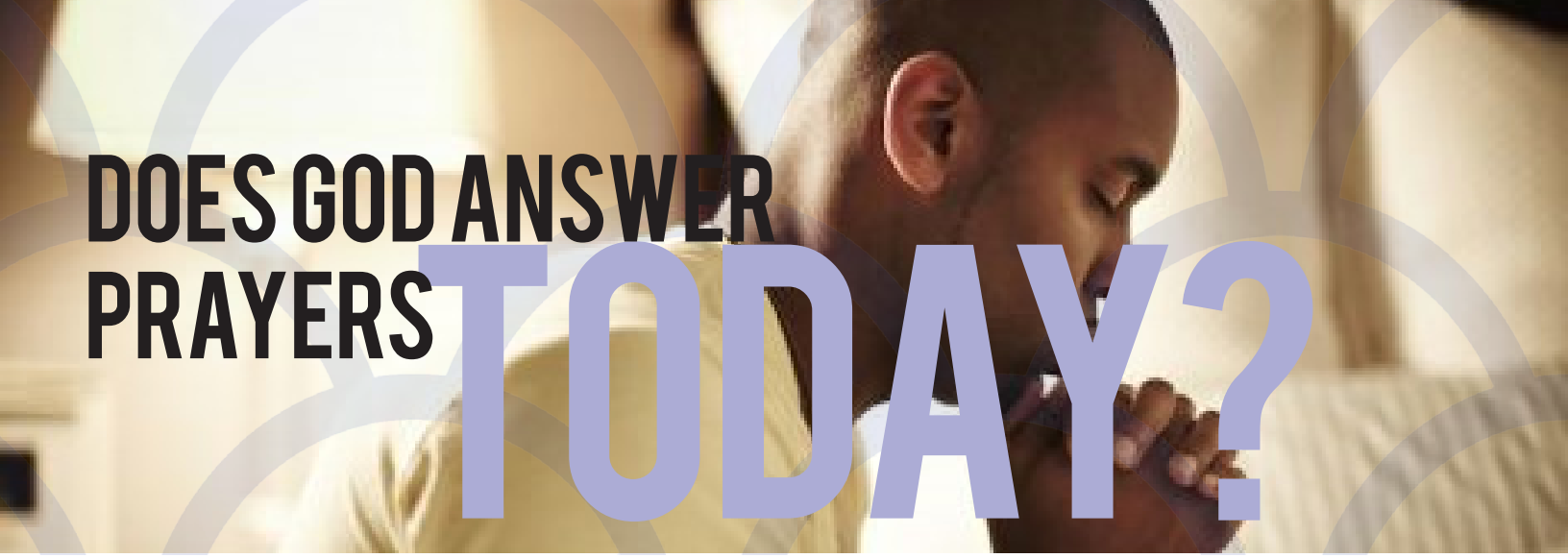
As we add our elaboration, avoiding the vain (ineffective, unproductive and futile) repetitions Jesus mentioned, we'll begin to develop a closer relationship with our Heavenly Father and our Savior Jesus Christ.

SHOULD WE REFER TO THESE OUTLINES AS THE LORD'S PRAYER?

Many publishers of the Holy Bible have included various "helps." Paragraph breaks and verse numbers were not part of the original texts. The subheads that have been added above different chapters and sections can vary from one edition to another.

Many publishers have chosen to add subheads to these two sections, Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4, often labeling them the Lord's Prayer.

But while these verses in Matthew and Luke are memorable (and memorizable), other passages give examples of Jesus Christ's actual prayers. The longest one recorded makes up the entire 17th chapter of the Gospel of John. This is a beautiful account of the words Jesus actually prayed on His last Passover with His disciples. John 17 is a very fine example of a real Lord's Prayer.



DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYERS TODAY?

The Bible is full of answered prayers, yet many are not convinced that God will answer their prayers today. What are the keys to having our prayers answered?

Many believe in God, but they aren't sure He hears them or answers their prayers. Perhaps they have tried to pray, but they did not receive an immediate answer or maybe the opposite of what they prayed for happened. Perhaps they feel God has ignored them.

The Bible contains many accounts of prayers being answered and other examples of requests that were not fulfilled. What does the Bible say about which prayers God answers—and when?

Note that this article is written for people who believe in God. Though answered prayer can actually be an additional proof of God's existence to those who believe, it will not convince the skeptic. This article is designed to help those who are being called by God realize He is interested in them and will answer their prayers (Luke 11:9-13; 1 John 3:22).

GOD HEARD JEHOSHAPHAT

We read in Psalm 34:15, "The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry."

One of the keys to answered prayer is having a humble heart of obedience toward God. This is how we show love toward God (1 John 5:1-3).

The account of Jehoshaphat, a king of Judah, gives a fine example of this relationship between a heart of obedience and God's hearing our prayers. Jehoshaphat's approach is described in 2 Chronicles 17:3-4: "Now the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the former ways of his father David … [and] sought the God of his father, and walked in His commandments and not according to the acts of Israel."

In the course of time the armies of Moab and Ammon set themselves to attack Judah (2 Chronicles 20:1). Jehoshaphat responded to this threat by seeking God and proclaiming a fast throughout Judah (2 Chronicles 20:3).

God heard the prayer of Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah and told them, "You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you" (2 Chronicles 20:17). The rest of 2 Chronicles 20 records the awesome miracle God used to deliver Judah.

God heard the prayer of a righteous man—Jehoshaphat, who led Judah in seeking God.

GOD ANSWERS THE RIGHTEOUS

Many other examples and passages in the Bible show whose prayers God hears and answers. We are told several times in Scripture that Abraham's faith and belief in God was accounted to him for righteousness (Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23). Abraham was God's friend because of the faithful, obedient heart that Abraham had.

Proverbs 15:8-9 also reinforces how important righteousness is to God: "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight. The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but He loves him who follows righteousness."

And the apostle James stated, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16). Abraham sought righteousness. If we seek righteousness as he did, God will hear our prayers.

Righteousness is something a Christian strives for. "Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility" (Zephaniah 2:3).

Jesus Christ said, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33).

GROWING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

As we study the Word of God, we learn that righteousness is a growth process. The apostle Paul shared this theme of growth with the Christians in Thessalonica: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other" (2 Thessalonians 1:3).

And the prophet Isaiah adds, "Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:6-7).

Like the tax collector in Luke 18:13-14, we all sin. Even though we are not perfect, we still can and should go to God. The Eternal God forgives us when we sincerely repent, and He then leads us toward righteousness. As we move toward righteousness, He says He will hear our prayers. "For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil" (1 Peter 3:12).

WHY DOES GOD NOT SEEM TO ANSWER OUR PRAYERS?

Scoffers, skeptics, critics and other nonbelievers in God, as well as some who are beginning a relationship with God, will have doubts. Some who have tried prayer will doubt because they did not receive the answer to their prayer they expected or desired. Therefore, they assume that God must have turned the proverbial deaf ear to their petition. But is that really the case?

The apostle James touches on this very subject in his epistle. The world—the society—James lived in was similar to what we endure today, and in his letter he asks, "Where do wars and fights come from among you?" (James 4:1). Don't make the mistake of just reading over those words! Think deeply about what your answer would be if the question were posed to you.

Then, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, James answers the question for us. He says, "Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask."

It's our human nature that begs for self-satisfaction, our ego that wants to be stroked, yet we do not realize that our selfish nature can prevent us from having a solid and good relationship with God!

But again, the disdainer would argue, "I *did* ask!"

James counters, "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures" (James 4:3).

Could it be that our own prayers have been misdirected? Was it a prayer for something we selfishly wanted for ourselves? Could it be we asked amiss? The meaning of the Greek word that James used here (translated "amiss") means "badly" (Frederick William Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*).

We should seriously consider the prayers we have given that we feel have gone unanswered, and then consider that God's answer may have been, "No."

That was the answer He gave the apostle Paul. Paul had some affliction, and he repeatedly asked for relief. Read God's answer in 2 Corinthians 12:9: "And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.'"

Sometimes God doesn't give us what we desire because He has something greater in store for us. Sometimes He says, "No, not at this time."

AN EXAMPLE OF ANSWERED PRAYER

But does God really hear our prayers today? In probably every congregation of the Church of God you can hear stories of members who have had their prayers answered through healing, protection from danger and help in the challenges of life.

In this article, let's look at just one real-life example from a published account by Herbert W. Armstrong, who led the Worldwide Church of God until his death in 1986.

In his *Autobiography*, Mr. Armstrong wrote of a time during the Great Depression when he was broke and his baby boy was in desperate need of milk. When he arrived home from work, his wife said, "Hurry! … Go to the store and get a quart of milk. The baby has missed one feeding, and it's a whole hour past his second feeding, and I haven't a bit of milk for him."

But Mr. Armstrong didn't even have a dime for the milk, so he closed the door and prayed a short but fervent prayer. After praying, "Before I even reached the kitchen, one of our girls cried out from the living-room window:

"'Oh Mother, here comes the old rag and bottle man!'

"'Well, quick! Beverly,' called out my wife, 'run and stop him! We have a lot of old things in the basement we can sell him!'

Rag and bottle men collected household items and then tried to sell them to merchants to scratch out a living in those difficult times.

"My wife showed him all kinds of things. We expected to get at least a dollar from him.

"He only shook his head.

"'No. Nothing here I want,' he said, starting back up the stairs.

"Our hearts sank. Halfway up the steps he stopped, glanced at a high stack of old magazines beside the stairs. Slowly he turned and retraced his steps, examining the stack of magazines.

"'I'll give you a dime for these,' he said. 'This is all I want.'

"I had asked God to send to us a dime—immediately—in haste! When God sent it, within the very minute I asked, we tried to increase it to a dollar or more. But the immediate NEED was a dime for milk. …

"We gratefully gave God thanks, as I ran all the way to the store and then back with the milk" (*Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong*, Vol. 1, 1986, pp. 401-403).

Admittedly, the above example is not as dramatic as people being resurrected from the dead or released from a deadly disease, and it probably won't impress a scoffer, skeptic or critic, but many people who have started on a new way of life would certainly add their own instances of God answering their prayers. They know God personally heard their prayers and He answered them.

Why not review your own "unanswered" prayers and try praying God's way? You'll find that as your meaningful relationship with Him develops, you'll understand more of God's answers to your prayers.

Author: Charles Haughee
This publication is not to be sold. It is produced as free educational material by the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 1009 • Allen, TX 75013-0017 • 972-521-7777 • 888-9-COGWA-9 (toll-free in the U.S.)
© 2014 Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc.
All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New King James Version (© 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.). Used by permission. All rights reserved.

About Life Hope & Truth

LifeHopeandTruth.com exists to fill a critical void in this world: the lack of understanding about the purpose of life, the lack of realistic hope for a better future and the lack of truth!

Neither religion nor science has satisfactorily addressed these issues, so people today are of divided opinions, confused or, worst of all, don't care anymore. The ancient words of the prophet Isaiah ring so true today: "Truth is fallen in the street." Why? Is it because God was right when He warned that humans are inclined to reject Him and usually choose not to know Him?

We are here for people who are searching for answers, who are ready to prove all things or who are hungry for more than what they've been taught most of their lives about God, the Bible, the meaning of life and how to live. We want to help you truly understand the good news of the gospel and fulfill Jesus Christ's admonition to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

LifeHopeandTruth.com is sponsored by the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc. It is supported by the generous contributions of donors and members of the Church around the world, who make it possible for everything on this site to be free of charge based on Jesus Christ's statement, "Freely you have received, freely give." You will never be charged or made to feel obligated for anything on this site.

The Church of God, a Worldwide Association, has congregations around the world in more than 50 countries, with headquarters in the United States near Dallas, Texas. To learn more about the Church, please visit our website **cogwa.org.**

Discover more about us:

Send us an email: **info@cogwa.org**
Find us on Facebook: **LifeHopeTruth**
Follow us on Twitter: **@LifeHopeTruth**
Search for us on Google+: **Life, Hope & Truth**

