

NEXT STEPS⁷

FAITH ESSENTIALS: EFFECTIVE PRAYER

SELF STUDY QUESTIONS

What am I expecting of God in prayer?
Has my prayer life been effective?
What am I missing out on in my prayer life?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How can we encourage each other to pursue a greater life of prayer, to live and act based on that lifestyle? What answers to prayer or responses from God have we experienced in our lives?

MAIN NOTES

What Is Prayer?

Two-way communication with God where we give of our time, heart, need, hope and in return we receive God's direction, leading, peace, comfort, we hear his voice, and feel his presence.

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, through prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7

Both sides participate in speaking and listening. "Draw near to me, and I will draw near to you."
James 4:8

Why Should We Pray?

In prayer, we grow in our relationship with God. We learn how to pray and speak with God over time.

Through prayer, we receive direction, we live a peace filled life, and receive provision such as healing, favor, and God's promises. Having an external focus and praying for our leaders and for the betterment of others is key to living a peace filled life as well.

Good things happen as a result of prayer. James 4 says that we lack things because we don't ask for them, and we certainly don't receive when praying with a personal agenda or selfish motives.

How Should We Pray?

Jesus' shows us a model of prayer for us in Matthew 6:9-13 is "The Lord's Prayer", which follows a pattern of "praise, provision, praise."

We should begin prayer with worship and thanks, then present our requests, thoughts, or communication to God, and finish it up in reverence to Him.

Practical Steps

Prayer has no qualifications or requirements to begin. Elegance is not necessary.

Prayer is simply about our heart as an individual relating to our Father in Heaven. Just start.

DAILY LIVING

There is no magic formula, but time spent in prayer is never wasted. God designed us and wants us to be genuine with Him as He is genuine with us. God places such a huge importance on prayer when it comes to having our needs met. Prayer is directly tied to His every day provision in our lives. Do we have an effective prayer life? Do we have all we need? In pursuing a greater prayer life we will not only grow closer to God and have our own needs met, we will be able to hear and discern His heart for others and how He would have us assist in meeting their needs as well. So much is accomplished daily in prayer with God. Don't miss out on anything that He has for you.

PRAYER POINT

Take a moment to go through the Self Study and Group Discussion questions again. Ask God to point out a key truth that He wants you to focus on. Ask Him what He wants to show you in your prayer life. What aspect of Himself does He want you to know more intimately through prayer?

PERSONAL NOTES